

# SYMBOLIC POEMS *of* WILLIAM BLAKE

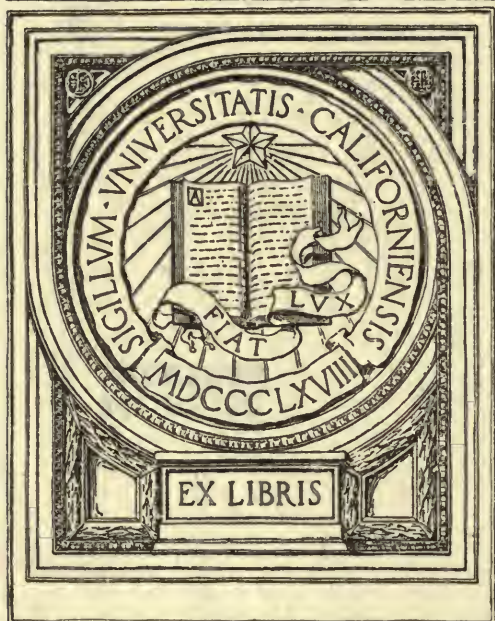
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SELECTIONS FROM THE SYMBOLICAL POEMS  
OF WILLIAM BLAKE



# SELECTIONS FROM THE SYMBOLICAL POEMS OF WILLIAM BLAKE

FREDERICK E. PIERCE, PH.D.

*Assistant Professor of English in Sheffield Scientific School, Yale University*



NEW HAVEN: YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

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First printed June, 1915, 500 copies

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## PREFACE

Those who believe that Blake's "Prophetic Books," *as wholes*, are great poems may consider the present volume as a simplified reader for beginners in Blake's symbolism, leading by graduated steps from the more obvious to the more complex aspects of these writings. Those who find the poetry of the "Prophetic Books" confined to isolated passages may regard this edition as an attempt to cull out such passages and arrange them in something roughly approximating an organic whole, as far as the refractory material renders this last step possible.

The text is based mainly on Mr. Ellis's 1906 edition, the only complete one now in print; but where the same passages occur in the selections of Mr. Sampson's excellent edition his readings have been adopted, although he has not always been followed in typographical details. Mr. Ellis's numerous editorial emendations in *Vala* have been discarded; and Blake's own words, as given in Ellis's appendix of the Quaritch edition, have been substituted. We believe with Mr. Ellis that some of his emendations are improvements; but we felt reluctant to place a version so full of editorial alterations before a public that had no chance of comparing these with the original wording. Our text is not offered as a definitive one, but simply as adequate for an introductory work. Mr. Sampson's text, where followed, has been used by the kind permission of Mr. Sampson himself, and of his publishers, the Oxford University Press.



## INTRODUCTION

The inner life and poetical development of William Blake is the story—perhaps the tragedy, though he himself would not have called it so—of an isolated mind. This was partly due to circumstances. His early educational advantages were poor; his friends were often incompetent advisers; he found no literary coterie, like that which nourished the genius of young Keats, opening its doors for him. The only contemporary man of letters with whom he came closely in touch was William Hayley, perhaps the most incompetent critic and overrated poetaster of his time. Blake's life (1757-1827) was exactly contemporary with the famous "romantic movement" in English literature, and much of his verse is highly romantic; yet he was about sixty years old before his great contemporaries Wordsworth and Coleridge knew of his writings or existence. But a deeper reason for the poet's mental isolation probably existed in the man himself. He was born with an inherent inability to learn by experience how the universe seemed to other men. He says in his *Everlasting Gospel*:

"But thou read'st black where I read white";

and this statement was true in an unfortunate sense that the poet little realized. Developing apart from those disciplinary forces which keep growing minds reasonably intelligible to each other, he built up a universe of his own which had no proper points of contact with the kosmos of any one else, and talked about it in a strange language of his own, which others rarely understood. ✓

Out of such an unfortunate attitude toward life grew the so-called "prophetic books" of Blake, written during the best years of his manhood, and later, for the most part, than the more fortunate lyrics that have made his poetical reputation.

They were inspired largely by the mystical philosophical systems of Swedenborg and Jacob Boehme, and were believed by the poet to be the dictation of heavenly voices, for which he acted as a mere amanuensis.

Some of them were published during Blake's life—if his method of printing them from his own engraved plates could be called publication;—others were left in manuscript; and a large part of the manuscript was destroyed by Tatham, his executor, after the author's death. As they exist to-day, they consist of several short books, *The Book of Urizen*, *The Book of Ahania*, etc., none of which exceeds five hundred lines; and the three long symbolic epics, *Vala*, *Milton*, and *Jerusalem*, composed later than the shorter ones. All of these books develop different phases of one allegory, or rather myth, in which the various forces within the human being are personified and shown in their struggles with each other.

Blake, like Berkeley, believed that mind is everything and matter non-existent; hence for him the brain of man was an arena at once small as a lantern and great as the universe, and in the brain of man the events of his poems occur. In that arena, where a less stormy genius had before located *Pilgrim's Progress*, move Titan Miltonic figures, reducing worlds to chaos or chaos to worlds. They are our passions, reasonings, impulses, godlike, demonlike, groping, erring, aspiring, dreaming and suffering. Chief among them tower the four Zoas or mental kings, spirits of intellect, emotion, sensuousness, and energy, and the beautiful, godlike figure of imaginative insight. Around them move such a confusing swarm of lesser figures as could be paralleled only from Brahmin cosmogony.

A careful analysis of these works shows that their central thought is by no means such a mass of morbid ravings as it has at times been considered. Blake emphasizes chiefly two ideas, both essentially reasonable and poetical. The first is that man attains his highest development, becomes the ideal man, only when the different forces within him are in a state of harmony and balance. The tyranny of any one of them—intellect, emotion, sensuousness, or energy—over the others produces a distorted soul that is at once unphilosophical, unpoetical, and unchristian. When one of these forces is displaced in its natural field of action by another, then men love coldly through their heads or judge blindly through their hearts, so that we have fanatical psychologists experimenting on their own children and sentimental juries endangering society by their rash acquittals. Our own age is the best proof of Blake's sanity here. His second main thesis is that imagination is absolutely necessary as the saving element in man. In *Jerusalem* imagination is identified with the Saviour Himself. For justification of the poet we need only turn to a passage in Mr. Galsworthy's recent play, *Strife*:



*Edgar* (scornfully). There's nothing wrong with our *humanity*.  
It's our imaginations, Mr. Scantlebury. ✓

*Wilder*. Nonsense! my imagination's as good as yours.

*Edgar*. If so, it isn't good enough.

As for Blake's other teachings, his defiance of law, his advocacy of free love, these theories are no less fallacious but no less sane in his writings than in those of Byron and Shelley and the German Romantic School.

But if Blake's central ideas can be defended, his manner of developing them cannot. If the pages of half a dozen short stories were cut into small sections, these sections mixed in a box and pasted in a book according to any random sequence, we should have a narrative much like those of the longer prophetic books—at least as they strike the casual peruser—without order or transitions, without beginning, middle or plan. Moreover, the main allegorical characters become surrounded by some three hundred minor ones, strange in name, uncertain in significance, till the head of the reader whirls.

A tabulated list of these weird *dramatis personæ* shows that the use of symbolic names grew on Blake like a disease. It also suggests what a fuller reading confirms, that nine tenths of these uncouth cognomens—appearing only a few times, often only once or twice—have little or no connection with the main thread of the poems. They are sheer dead weight, confusing and disgusting readers who might otherwise find much to admire. What they need is not explanation but excision.

The "prophetic" books contain some profound thought; but it is so mixed with fallacies and absurdities, so clouded by incoherent arrangement and wilfully mystifying language, that we do not believe the world will ever take Blake seriously as a philosopher. There remains another question. How far in these allegorical writings was he a poet? On this head there have been the widest differences of opinion. Messrs. Ellis and Yeats have considered *Vala* the masterpiece of a master genius. At the other extreme, Mr. J. Comyns Carr wrote in Ward's English Poets: "The defects of such work are too grave for any kind of serious vindication to be really possible"; and his attitude remains practically unchanged in the new *Encyclopedia Britannica*. A position which seems to us more just than either is that taken recently by Prof. Oliver Elton: "This poem [*Jerusalem*] can only disgust save in selections, but without such selections the genius of the writer will not be understood. It contains long passages of rare and achieved beauty. . . . In single passages Blake is the peer of ✓

Shelley; but no great poet has ever managed, by the conduct of his story, so completely to revolt the artistic judgment."

In the present volume the editor has tried to cull out the best sections from this frightfully uneven mass of verse and arrange them in something as nearly as possible like narrative sequence. No doubt he has made errors of judgment; but, as a whole, the book represents what is most poetical and least unintelligible in the originals. Even in such a doctored form as the present, the poems are hard reading. There is a lack of organic structure in the verse paragraphs, at times in the sentences; and idea slips cog with idea. To enjoy the poetry we must not ask ourselves too closely for the precise sequence of thought. We must remember that Blake was an artist and engraver as well as a poet; that he is painting here in language just such mystic scenes as he graved and drew. We must let his word pictures glide past our imagination like the illustrations that he himself designed for these very poems, vivid in detail, hazy in synthesis, dimly suggesting unrealized concepts and undefinable moods. Such poetry may not be the greatest; its very nature may imply an excess of aspiration over achieving power; but it is too truly poetical to be left where it has lain so long, on the scrap-heap of literary failure.

Aside from purely poetical value, the prophetic books have an interest for the literary historian which justifies their study. They are the most marked outcropping in English romanticism of the cult of Jacob Boehme, which exercised so strong an influence on the German *Romantiker* and found noblest expression in Novalis's *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. Also the author's Swedenborgian tendencies are interesting in comparison with a work like Balzac's *Seraphita*. Blake's very faults have a certain historical significance, they are so distinctly romantic faults, an orgy of lawlessness, in which the poet follows his own whims not only in methods of composition but even in the meaning and associations of words. At his worst, Blake is the *reductio ad absurdum* of romantic theory, just as at his best he is the rich blossom of romantic practice.

This should have been a noble creature : he  
Hath all the energy which would have made  
A goodly frame of glorious elements,  
Had they been wisely mingled ; as it is,  
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness,  
And mind and dust, and passions and pure thoughts,  
Mix'd and contending without end or order,  
All dormant or destructive. He will perish,  
And yet he must not ; I will try once more,  
For such are worth redemption.

Byron's *Manfred*.





## LOCATION OF SELECTIONS

E refers to Ellis's 1906 edition; S to Sampson's 1913 edition. Page numbers in parentheses represent Blake's pagination as given by Ellis. (Om.) indicates that certain lines in the passage are omitted. Roman numbers in capitals refer to the volume, those in small type to the Night of *Vala*<sup>1</sup> in Ellis.

- I. 1. Vala. E II, i, 1-3; S 349.
- I. 2. Jerusalem. E II, (4) and (5), (Om.); S 386 (ll. 1-6 only).
- II. 1. Daughters of Albion. E I, (3) and (4); S 288.
- II. 2. Daughters of Albion. E I, (7) and (8); S 292.
- II. 3. America. E I, (6); S 295-296.
- II. 4. Milton. E I, (18).
- II. 5. Milton. E I, (31); S 379-380, (Om.).
- II. 6. Vala. E II, i, 348-355; S 350.
- II. 7. Jerusalem. E II, (49).
- III. 1. Heaven and Hell. E I, (12) and (13); S 253-254.
- III. 2. Heaven and Hell. E I, (17), (18) and (19); S 256-257.
- IV. Milton. E I, (39) and (40), (Om.).
- V. 1. Vala. E II, i, 29-81, (Om.).
- V. 2. Vala. E II, i, 173-186; S 350 (ll. 1-9 only).
- V. 3. Vala. E II, i, 386-403.
- V. 4. Vala. E II, ii, 386-418; S 352-354 (omits first line).
- V. 5. Vala. E II, viii, 526-576, (Om.).
- VI. 1. Vala. E II, vii, 757-773; S 357-358, (Om.).
- VI. 2. Vala. E II, ix, 384-552; S 364-365 (ll. 3-69 only), 366-367 (ll. 86-100 only).
- VI. 3. Vala. E II, ix, 679-732, (Om.).
- VI. 4. Jerusalem. E II, (65).
- VII. 1. Bk. of Urizen, opening lines. E I, (3); S 314-315.
- VII. 2. Vala. E II, i, 328-335.
- VII. 3. Bk. of Ahania, end. E I, 396-398; S 346-348, (Om.).
- VII. 4. Vala. E II, iii, 1-40, (Om.).
- VII. 5. Vala. E II, v, 189-240; vi, 1-40; 72-322; vii, 1-112, (Om.); S 354-356 (Urizen's song in dens of Urthona only).

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps more properly entitled *The Four Zoas*. I have retained *Vala* as the title used in the only complete edition of it.

- VII. 6. Vala. E II, ii, 117-205; 240-262; Jerusalem, E II, (66).  
 VII. 7. Vala. E II, ix, 260-351; 576-666, (Om.); S 363-364 (ll. 8-24 only).  
 VIII. 1. Bk. of Los, Chap. ii. E I, 407; S 337.  
 VIII. 2. Vala. E II, i, 218-244, (Om.).  
 VIII. 3. Vala. E II, i, 359-368.  
 VIII. 4. Vala. E II, ii, 295-382, (Om.); S 351-352 (ll. 35-69 only).  
 VIII. 5. Vala. E II, vii, 184-209.  
 VIII. 6. Vala. E II, v, 1-41, (Om.).  
 VIII. 7. Vala. E II, v, 114-172, (Om.).  
 VIII. 8. Milton. E I, (23); S 375 (ll. 1-13), (Om.).  
 VIII. 9. Jerusalem. E II, (10).  
 VIII. 10. Milton. E I, (25)-(28), (Om.); S 378-379 (ll. 18-end only).  
 VIII. 11. Jerusalem. E II, (59).  
 VIII. 12. Jerusalem. E II, (53), (12)-(13), (Om.).  
 VIII. 13. Milton. E I, (22).  
 VIII. 14. Milton. E I, (35)-(36), (Om.).  
 VIII. 15. Milton. E I, (19).  
 VIII. 16. Milton. E I, (20); S 374 (ll. 15-22 only).  
 IX. 1. Jerusalem. E II, (30).  
 IX. 2. Jerusalem. E II, (9), (Om.).  
 IX. 3. Jerusalem. E II, (37)-(38); S 394 (ll. 17-29 only).  
 IX. 4. (a) Vala. E II, viii, 500-524. (b) Jerusalem. E II, (19).  
 IX. 5. Jerusalem. E II, (24).  
 IX. 6. Jerusalem. E II and (33)-(34).  
 IX. 7. Milton. E I, (30)-(31), (Om.).  
 IX. 8. Vala. E II, i, 203-209.  
 IX. 9. Jerusalem. E II, (25), (Om.).  
 IX. 10. Jerusalem. E II, (56)-(57), (Om.).  
 IX. 11. Jerusalem. E II, (60), (Om.).  
 IX. 12. Jerusalem. E II, (60)-(62), (Om.); S 399-401 (ll. 21-72 only).  
 IX. 13. Jerusalem. E II, (66), (Om.).  
 IX. 14. Jerusalem. E II, (78)-(79), (Om.).  
 IX. 15. Jerusalem. E II, (83)-(86), (Om.); S 406-407 (ll. 34-65 only).  
 IX. 16. Vala. E II, ix, 822-844.  
 IX. 17. Milton. E I, (44)-(45), (Om.).  
 IX. 18. Jerusalem. E II, (94)-(99); S 409-410 (ll. 1-18, 28-40, and last five lines only).

SELECTIONS FROM THE SYMBOLICAL POEMS  
OF WILLIAM BLAKE



# I

## BLAKE'S OWN ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS SYMBOLIC POEMS

### I

[*The opening lines of Vala.*]

The song of the Agèd Mother, which shook the heavens with wrath,  
Hearing the march of long-resounding, strong, heroic verse,  
Marshall'd in order for the day of Intellectual Battle.

### 2

[*From the opening lines of Jerusalem. The "sleeper of the land of shadows" whom the Saviour addresses here is the English nation.*]

This theme calls me in sleep night after night, and ev'ry morn  
Awakes me at sunrise; then I see the Saviour over me,  
Spreading His beams of love, and dictating the words of this mild song:

"Awake! awake! O sleeper of the land of shadows, wake! expand! ✓  
I am in you, and you in me, mutual in love divine; ✓  
Fibres of love from man to man thro' Albion's pleasant land.  
Thy brethren call thee, and thy fathers and thy sons,  
Thy nurses and thy mothers, thy sisters and thy daughters  
Weep at thy soul's disease, and the Divine Vision is darken'd."

✓ Trembling I sit day and night; my friends are astonish'd at me,  
Yet they forgive my wanderings, I rest not from my great task:  
To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the immortal Eyes  
Of Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought, into Eternity;  
✓ Ever expanding in the Bosom of God the Human Imagination.  
O Saviour, pour upon me thy Spirit of meekness and love,  
Annihilate the Selfhood in me, be thou all my life,  
Guide thou my hand which trembles exceedingly upon the rock of ages.

## II

### UNSYMBOLIC POETRY IN THE SYMBOLIC POEMS

#### I

[*A Song of Thought.*]

Tell me what is the night or day to one o'erflow'd with woe?  
Tell me what is a thought? and of what substance is it made?  
Tell me what is a joy? and in what gardens do joys grow?

#### I



And in what rivers swim the sorrows? and upon what mountains  
Wave shadows of discontent? and in what houses dwell the wretched,  
Drunken with woe, forgotten, and shut up from cold despair?  
Tell me where dwell the thoughts, forgotten till thou call them forth?  
Tell me where dwell the joys of old, and where the ancient loves?  
And when will they renew again, and the night of oblivion past,  
That I might traverse times and spaces far remote, and bring  
Comforts into a present sorrow and a night of pain?  
Where goest thou, O thought? to what remote land is thy flight?  
If thou returnest to the present moment of affliction,  
Wilt thou bring comforts on thy wings, and dews and honey and balm,  
Or poison from the desert wilds, from the eyes of the envier?

2

[*The Holiness of Joy.*]

Does the sun walk in glorious raiment, on the secret floor,  
Where the cold miser spreads his gold? or does the bright cloud drop  
On his stone threshold? does his eye behold the beam that brings  
Expansion to the eye of pity? or will he bind himself  
Beside the ox to thy hard furrow? does not that mild beam blot  
The bat, the owl, the glowing tiger, and the king of night?  
The sea-fowl takes the wintry blast for a cov'ring to her limbs,  
And the wild snake the pestilence to adorn him with gems and gold;  
And trees and birds, and beasts and men, behold their eternal joy.  
Arise, you little glancing wings, and sing your infant joy!  
Arise, and drink your bliss, for every thing that lives is holy! ✓

3

[*A Song of Freedom.*]

[*This song expresses Blake's sympathy with the triumph of the American Revolution.*] ✓

The morning comes, the night decays, the watchmen leave their stations;  
The grave is burst, the spices shed, the linen wrapped up;  
The bones of death, the cov'ring clay, the sinews shrunk and dry'd,  
Reviving shake, inspiring move, breathing, awakening,  
Spring like redeemed captives, when their bonds and bars are burst.  
Let the slave grinding at the mill run out into the field,  
Let him look up into the heavens and laugh in the bright air;  
Let the enchained soul shut up in darkness and in sighing,  
Whose face has never seen a smile in thirty weary years,  
Rise and look out; his chains are loose, his dungeon doors are open,

And let his wife and children return from the oppressor's scourge.  
 They look behind at every step and believe it is a dream,  
 Singing: "The Sun has left his blackness, and has found a fresher  
                   morning,  
 And the fair Moon rejoices in the clear and cloudless night;  
 For Empire is no more, and now the Lion and Wolf shall cease."

4

[*The Fly and the Man.*] ✓

[*These lines develop one of Blake's favorite ideas, that "the kingdom of Heaven is within you." They should be compared with The Fly in The Songs of Experience.*]

See'st thou the little wingèd fly, smaller than a grain of sand?  
 It has a heart like thee, a brain open to heaven and hell,  
 With inside wondrous and expansive, its gates are not clos'd.  
 I hope thine are not. Hence it clothes itself in rich array.  
 Hence thou art cloth'd with human beauty, O thou mortal man.  
 Seek not thy heavenly father then beyond the skies;  
 There Chaos dwells and ancient Night and Og and Anak old.

5

[*The Lamentation of the Daughters of Dreamland.*]

Thou hearest the Nightingale begin the Song of Spring;  
 The Lark sitting upon his earthy bed, just as the morn  
 Appears, listens silent; then springing from the waving Corn-field, loud  
 He leads the Choir of Day—trill, trill, trill, trill,  
 Mounting upon the wings of light into the Great Expanse.  
 Re-echoing against the lovely blue and shining heavenly Shell,  
 His little throat labours with inspiration; every feather  
 On throat and breast and wings vibrates with the effluence Divine.  
 All Nature listens silent to him, and the awful Sun  
 Stands still upon the Mountain looking on this little Bird  
 With eyes of soft humility and wonder, love, and awe.  
 Then loud from their green covert all the Birds begin their Song;  
 The Thrush, the Linnet, and the Goldfinch, Robin, and the Wren  
 Awake the Sun from his sweet reverie upon the Mountain.  
 The Nightingale again assays his song, and thro' the day  
 And thro' the night warbles luxuriant, every Bird of Song  
 Attending his loud harmony with admiration and love.  
 This is a Vision of the lamentation of Beulah over Ololon.

Thou perceivest the Flowers put forth their precious Odours,  
 And none can tell how from so small a center comes such sweet,  
 Forgetting that within that Center Eternity expands. . . .  
 First, ere the morning breaks, joy opens in the flowery bosoms,  
 Joy even to tears, which the Sun rising dries; first the Wild Thyme  
 And Meadow-sweet, downy and soft, waving among the reeds,  
 Light springing on the air, lead the sweet Dance; they wake  
 The Honeysuckle sleeping on the Oak, the flaunting beauty  
 Revels along upon the wind; the White-thorn, lovely May,  
 Opens her many lovely eyes; listening, the Rose still sleeps.  
 None dare to wake her; soon she bursts her crimson-curtained bed  
 And comes forth in the majesty of beauty. Every Flower,  
 The Pink, the Jessamine, the Wallflower, the Carnation,  
 The Jonquil, the mild Lilly opes her heavens; every Tree  
 And Flower and Herb soon fill the air with an innumerable Dance,  
 Yet all in order sweet and lovely. Men are sick with love.  
 Such is a Vision of the lamentation of Beulah over Ololon.

6

[*Natura sub Specie Æternitatis.*]

Eternity appeared above them as One Man enfolded  
 In Luvah's<sup>1</sup> robes of blood, and bearing all his afflictions;  
 As the sun shines down on the misty earth, such was the Vision.  
 But purple night, and crimson morning, and golden day descending  
 Through the clear changing atmosphere displayed green fields among  
 The varying clouds like paradises stretched in the expanse,  
 With towns and villages and temples, tents, sheepfolds and pastures,  
 Where dwell the children of the elemental worlds in harmony.

7

[*The Tragedy of the Unimaginative Man.*] ✓

Ah! weak and wide astray! Ah, shut in narrow, doleful form!  
 Creeping in reptile flesh upon the bosom of the ground;  
 The Eye of Man, a little narrow orb, closed up and dark,  
 Scarcely beholding the Great Light, conversing with the ground;  
 The Ear, a little shell, in small volutions shutting out  
 True Harmonies, and comprehending great as very small;  
 The Nostrils bent down to the earth and clos'd with senseless flesh,  
 That odours cannot them expand, nor joy on them exult;  
 The Tongue, a little moisture fills, a little food it cloys,  
 A little sound it utters, and its cries are faintly heard.

<sup>1</sup> The spirit of love and of the heart's blood.



### III

## FROM "THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL"

### I

[*Blake and the Prophets.*]

[*Blake entitled this passage, "A memorable fancy." It illustrates his admiration for the old Hebrew literature, his attitude toward his own "revelations" (being the same as that of Ezekiel), and also his fundamental conception that the poetic genius underlay all true religion and morality.*]

The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel dined with me, and I asked them how they dared so roundly to assert that God spoke to them; and whether they did not think at the time that they would be misunderstood, and so be the cause of imposition.

Isaiah answered: "I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception; but my senses discovered the infinite in everything, and as I was then persuaded, and remain confirmed, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences but wrote."

Then I asked: "Does a firm persuasion that a thing is so, make it so?"

He replied: "All poets believe that it does, and in ages of imagination this firm persuasion removed mountains; but many are not capable of a firm persuasion of anything."

Then Ezekiel said: "The philosophy of the east taught the first principles of human perception. Some nations held one principle for the origin, and some another; we of Israel taught that the Poetic Genius (as you now call it) was the first principle and all the others merely derivative, which was the cause of our despising the Priests and Philosophers of other countries, and prophesying that all Gods would at last be proved to originate in ours and to be the tributaries of the Poetic Genius. It was this that our great poet, King David, desired so fervently and invokes so pathetically, saying by this he conquers enemies and governs kingdoms; and we so loved our God, that we cursed in his name all the deities of surrounding nations, and asserted that they had rebelled. From these opinions the vulgar came to think that all nations would at last be subject to the Jews.

"This," said he, "like all firm persuasions, is come to pass, for all nations believe the Jews' code and worship the Jews' god, and what greater subjection can be?"

I heard this with some wonder, and must confess my own conviction.

## [Blake and the Angel.]

*[The angel here represents, not a denizen of the highest heaven, but a well-meaning being, governed by those conventional ideas of religion and morality which Blake considered especially pernicious. To such a conventional mind many things appear evil and monstrous which to a clear, unprejudiced eye are beautiful and innocent. What the angel views as an abyss and a monster is seen by Blake, when unprejudiced and alone, to be a moonlit night and a charming musician.]*

An Angel came to me and said: "O pitiable, foolish young man! O horrible! O dreadful state! Consider the hot, burning dungeon thou art preparing for thyself to all eternity, to which thou art going in such career."

I said: "Perhaps you will be willing to show me my eternal lot, and we will contemplate together upon it, and see whether your lot or mine is most desirable?"

So he took me thro' a stable and thro' a church and down into the church vault, at the end of which was a mill. Thro' the mill we went, and came to a cave. Down the winding cavern we groped our tedious way, till a void boundless as a nether sky appeared beneath us, and we held by the roots of trees, and hung over this immensity. But I said: "If you please, we will commit ourselves to this void, and see whether Providence is here also. If you will not, I will." But he answered, "Do not presume, O young man, but as we here remain, behold thy lot which will soon appear when the darkness passes away."

So I remained with him, sitting in the twisted root of an oak. He was suspended in a fungus, which hung with the head downward into the deep.

By degrees we beheld the infinite Abyss, fiery as the smoke of a burning city. Beneath us, at an immense distance, was the sun, black but shining; round it were fiery tracks on which revolved vast spiders, crawling after their prey, which flew, or rather swum, in the infinite deep, in the most terrific shapes of animals sprung from corruption; and the air was full of them, and seemed composed of them—these are Devils, and are called Powers of the Air. I now asked my companion which was my eternal lot? He said, "Between the black and white spiders."

But now, from between the black and white spiders, a cloud and fire burst and rolled thro' the deep, blackening all beneath, so that the nether deep grew black as a sea, and rolled with a terrible noise. Beneath us was nothing now to be seen but a black tempest, till looking east between the clouds and the waves we saw a cataract of blood mixed with fire, and not many stones' throw from us appeared and sunk again the scaly fold of a monstrous serpent. At last, to the east, distant about three degrees, appeared a fiery crest above the waves. Slowly it reared like a ridge of

golden rocks, till we discovered two globes of crimson fire, from which the sea fled away in clouds of smoke; and now we saw it was the head of Leviathan. His forehead was divided into streaks of green and purple like those on a tiger's forehead. Soon we saw his mouth and red gills hang just above the raging foam, tinging the black deep with beams of blood, advancing toward us with all the fury of a spiritual existence.

My friend the Angel climbed up from his station into the mill; I remained alone, and then this appearance was no more; but I found myself sitting on a pleasant bank beside a river, by moonlight, hearing a harper, who sung to the harp; and his theme was, "The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water, and breeds reptiles of the mind."

But I arose and sought for the mill, and there I found my Angel, who, surprised, asked me how I escaped.

I answered: "All that we saw was owing to your metaphysics; for when you ran away, I found myself on a bank by moonlight hearing a harper."

#### IV

#### A VISION OF SATAN

At Felpham, a seashore town where Blake wrote much of his symbolic poetry, he has a vision of the spirit of Milton bringing him a revelation, and of the spirit Satan. Satan in Blake is sometimes represented as an evil power, sometimes as a good power wrongly supposed by men to be evil. Here he is evil. Like the fiends in Book I of *Paradise Lost*, he represents the sinister power of false religions, imitating the Eternal, Great Humanity, and darkening man's heaven with his mantle of mistaken laws.

And Milton collecting all his fibres into impregnable strength,  
Descended down a Paved work of all kinds of precious stones  
Out from the eastern sky, descending down into my Cottage  
Garden, clothed in black, severe and silent he descended.

The Spectre of Satan stood upon the roaring sea, and beheld  
Milton within his sleeping Humanity; trembling and shudd'ring,  
He stood upon the waves a Twenty-seven-fold mighty Demon  
Gorgeous and beautiful. Loud roll his thunders against Milton.  
Loud Satan thunder'd, loud and dark upon mild Felpham shore,  
Not daring to touch one fibre, he howl'd round upon the Sea.

I also stood in Satan's bosom, and beheld its desolations,  
A ruin'd Man, a ruin'd building of God, not made with hands,  
Its plains of burning sand, its mountains of marble terrible,  
Its pits and declivities flowing with molten ore and fountains



Of pitch and nitre; its ruin'd palaces and cities and mighty works;  
Its furnaces of affliction, in which his Angels and Emanations  
Labour with blacken'd visages among its stupendous ruins;  
Arches and pyramids and porches, colonnades and domes,  
In which dwells Mystery, Babylon; here is her secret place.  
From hence she comes forth on the Churches in delight.  
Here is her Cup fill'd with its poisons in these horrid vales;  
And here her scarlet Veil woven in pestilence and war.

Suddenly around Milton on my Path, the Starry Seven  
Burn'd terrible. My Path became a solid fire, as bright  
As the clear Sun, and Milton, silent, came down on my Path.  
And there went forth from the Starry limbs of the Seven, Forms  
Human, with Trumpets innumerable, sounding articulate,  
As the Seven spake; and they stood in a mighty Column of Fire,  
Surrounding Felpham's Vale, reaching to the Mundane Shell.

Loud Satan thunder'd, loud and dark upon mild Felpham's Shore,  
Coming in a Cloud with Trumpets and with Fiery Flame,  
An awful Form eastward from midst of a bright Paved-work  
Of precious stones, by Cherubim surrounded, so permitted  
(Lest he should fall apart in his Eternal Death) to imitate  
The Eternal Great Humanity Divine, surrounded by  
His Cherubim and Seraphim in ever happy Eternity.  
Beneath sat Chaos, Sin on his right hand, Death on his left.  
And Ancient Night spread over all the heav'n his Mantle of Laws.

## V

### FROM THE STORY OF THARMAS AND ENION

Tharmas is one of the four allegoric kings of Blake's mental realm, the presiding genius of the vegetable world, and the spirit of dreamy, sensuous laziness. Enion is his wife, and appears at times as a kind of universal mother. In these extracts she is represented as grieving over Tharmas' unworthiness. Like most of Blake's symbolic deities, she dies and comes to life again. In our second extract from the story of Luvah and Vala, Tharmas and Enion appear as mature lovers, then are transformed to children, and play in the gardens of Vala.

## I

Enion said: "Thy fears have made me tremble, thy terrors have surrounded me.

All love is lost, Terror succeeds, and hatred instead of love,  
And stern demands of Right and Duty, instead of Liberty.

Once thou wast to me the loveliest son of heaven, but now  
Why art thou terrible? Yet I love thee in thy terror still.  
I am almost extinct, and soon shall be a shadow in Albion,  
Unless some way can be found that I can look upon thee and live.  
Hide me in some shadowy semblance, secret, whispering in my ear  
In secret of soft wings, in mazes of delusive beauty.  
I have looked into the secret soul of him I love,  
And in the dark recesses have found sin, and cannot return."

Trembling and pale sat Tharmas, weeping into his cloud.

"Sometimes I think thou art a flower expanding,  
Sometimes I think thou art a fruit, breaking from its bud  
In dreadful dolour and pain; and I am like an atom,—  
A nothing, left in darkness; yet I am an identity.  
I wish, and feel, and weep, and moan! Ah, terrible! terrible!  
Why wilt thou examine every little fibre of my soul,  
Spreading them out before the sun like stalks of flax to dry?"

The Infant Joy is beautiful, but his anatomy  
Horrible, ghast, and deadly. Nought shalt thou find in it  
But dark despair and ever-brooding melancholy.  
Thou wilt go mad with horror if thou examine thus  
Every moment of my secret hours. Yea, I know  
That I have sinned. . . . Despair will try self-murder on my soul.  
O Enion, thou art thyself a lost power in hell,  
Though Heavenly beautiful to draw me to destruction."

Listening to her soft lamentations, soon his tongue began  
To lisp out words, and soon in masculine strength augmenting he  
Reared up a form of gold and stood upon the glittering rock  
A shadowy human form winged, and in his depths  
The dazzling gems shone clear, rapturous in fury,  
Glorying in his own eyes, exalted in terrific pride,  
Searching for glory, wishing that the heavens had eyes to see,  
And wishing that the earth could ope her eyelids and behold  
Such wondrous beauty opening in the midst of all his glory,  
That might but Enion could be found to praise, admire, and love.

Three days in self-admiring raptures on the rock he flamed,  
And three dark nights repined in solitude, but the third morn  
Astonished he found Enion hidden in the darksome cave.

She spoke: "What am I? Wherefore was I put forth on these rocks,  
Among the clouds, to tremble in the wind, in solitude?  
Where is the voice that lately woke the desert? Where the face

That wept among the clouds, and where the voice that shall reply?  
No other living thing is here, the sea, the earth, the heaven,  
And Enion, desolate? Where art thou, Tharmas? O return."

Three days she wailed, and three dark nights sitting among the rocks,  
While the bright spectre hid himself among the darkening clouds.  
Then sleep fell on her eyelids in a chasm of the valley.

2

Enion brooded o'er the rocks. The rough rocks groaning vegetate—  
Such power was given to the solitary wanderer—  
The barked oak, the long-limbed beech, the chestnut-tree, the pine,  
The pear-tree mild, the frowning walnut, the sharp crab, and apple  
sweet;  
The rough bark opens, twittering peep forth little beaks and wings,  
The nightingale, the goldfinch, robin, lark, linnet and thrush.  
The goat leaped from the craggy cliff, the sheep awoke from the  
mould,  
Upon its green stalk rose the corn, waving innumerable,  
Enfolding the bright infants from the desolating winds—  
They sulk upon her breast, her hair became like snow on mountains,  
Weaker and weaker, weeping, woeful, wearier and wearier,  
Faded, and her bright eyes decay'd with pity and love.  
And then they wandered far away, she sought for them in vain.  
In weeping blindness, stumbling, she followed them o'er rocks and  
mountains.

3

Enion, blind and age-bent, wept upon the desolate wind:—

"Why does the Raven cry aloud and no eye pities her?  
Why fall the Sparrow and the Robin in the foodless winter?  
Faint, shivering, they sit on leafless bush or frozen stone  
Wearied with seeking food across the snowy waste, the little  
Heart cold, the little tongue consumed that once in thoughtless joy  
Gave songs of gratitude to waving cornfields round their nest.

Why howl the lion and the wolf? Why do they roam abroad?  
Deluded by the summer's heat they sport in enormous love,  
And cast their young out to the hungry winds and sandy deserts.

Why is the sheep given to the knife? The lamb plays in the sun.  
He starts; he hears the foot of Man! He says 'Take thou my wool,  
But spare my life'; but he knows not that winter cometh fast.



The spider sits in his laboured net, eager, watching for the fly.  
Presently comes a famished bird and takes away the spider.  
His web is left all desolate that his little anxious heart  
So careful wove and spread it out with sighs and weariness."

This was the lamentation of Enion round the golden tent.

4

[Thus Enion] wails on the dark deep; the golden heavens tremble:  
"I am made to sow the thistle for wheat, the nettle for a nourishing  
dainty.

I have planted a false oath in the earth; it has brought forth a  
poison tree.

I have chosen the serpent for a counsellor, and the dog  
For a schoolmaster to my children.

I have blotted out from light and living the dove and nightingale.

And I have caused the earthworm to beg from door to door.

I have taught the thief a secret path into the house of the just.

I have taught pale Artifice to spread his nets upon the morning.

My heavens are brass, my earth is iron, my moon a clod of clay,

My sun a pestilence burning at noon, and a vapour of death in night.

What is the price of experience? Do men buy it for a song?

Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No, it is bought with the price

Of all that a man hath,—his house, his wife, his children.

Wisdom is sold in the desolate market where none come to buy,

And in the withered field where the farmer ploughs for bread in vain.

It is an easy thing to triumph in the summer's sun,

And in the vintage to sing on the waggon loaded with corn.

It is an easy thing to talk of patience to the afflicted,

To speak the laws of prudence to the houseless wanderer,

To listen to the hungry raven's cry in wintry season,

When the red blood is filled with wine and with the marrow of lambs.

It is an easy thing to laugh at wrathful elements,

To hear the dog howl at the wintry door, the ox in the slaughter-  
house moan;

To see a God on every wind and a blessing on every blast;

To hear sounds of love in the thunderstorm that destroys our enemy's  
house;

To rejoice in the blight that covers his field, and the sickness that cuts  
off his children,

While our olive and vine sing and laugh round our door, and our  
children bring fruits and flowers.

Then the groan and the dolour are quite forgotten, and the slave  
grinding at the mill,

And the captive in chains, and the poor in the prison, and the soldier  
in the field  
When the shattered bone hath laid him groaning among the happier  
dead.

It is an easy thing to rejoice in the tents of prosperity:—  
Thus would I sing and thus rejoice: but it is not so with me.”

5

Thus cries Ahania. Enion replies from the caverns of the grave:  
“Fear not, O poor forsaken one. O land of grass and thorns,  
Where once the olive flourished and the cedar spread his wings,  
Once I wailed desolate like thee; my fallow fields in fear  
Cried to the churchyards and the earthworm came in dismal state.  
I found him in my bosom, and I said the time of love  
Appears upon the rocks and hills in silent shades, but soon  
A voice came in the night, a midnight cry upon the mountains:  
‘Awake! The bridegroom cometh!’ I awoke to sleep no more.  
But an eternal consummation is dark Enion.  
The watery grave! O! thou cornfield! O! thou vegetative happy!  
More happy is the dark consumer. Hope drowns all my torment,  
For I am now surrounded by a shadowy vortex drawing  
The spectre quite away from Enion that I die a death  
Of bitter hope, although I consume in these raging waters.  
The furrowed field replies to the grave, I hear her reply to me,—  
‘Behold the time approaches fast that thou shalt be as a thing  
Forgotten. When one speaks of thee he will not be believed.  
When the man gently fades away in his immortality,  
When the mortal disappears in improved knowledge, cast away  
The former things; so shall the mortal gently fade away,  
And so become invisible to those who still remain.’

Listen. I will tell thee what is done in the caverns of the grave.  
The Lamb of God has rent the veil of mystery, soon to return  
In clouds and fires around the rock, and thy mysterious tree.  
And as the seed waits eagerly watching for its flower and fruit,  
Anxious its little soul looks out into the clear expanse  
To see if hungry winds are abroad with their invisible array,  
So Man looks out in tree, and herb, and fish, and bird, and beast,  
Collecting up the scattered portions of his immortal body  
Into the elemental forms of everything that grows.  
He tries the sullen north wind, riding on its angry furrows,  
The sultry south when the sun rises, and the angry east  
When the sun sets and the clods harden and the cattle stand  
Drooping, and the birds hide in their silent nests. He stores his  
thoughts



As in store-houses in his memory. He regulates the forms  
 Of all beneath and all above, and in the gentle west  
 Reposes where the sun's heat dwells. He rises to the sun  
 And to the planets of the night, and to the stars that gild  
 The Zodiacs, and the stars that sullen stand to north and south.  
 He touches the remotest pole, and in the centre weeps  
 That Man should labour and sorrow, and learn and forget and return  
 To the dark valley whence he came, and begin his labours anew.  
 In pain he sighs, in pain he labours, and his universe  
 Sorrowing in birds over the deep, or howling in the wolf  
 Over the slain, and moaning in the cattle; and in the winds,  
 And in the cries of birth and in the groans of death his voice  
 Is heard throughout the universe. Wherever a grass grows  
 Or a leaf buds, the Eternal Man is seen, is heard, is felt,  
 And all his sorrows, till he re-assumes his ancient bliss."

## VI

### FROM THE STORY OF LUVAH AND VALA

Luvah, like Tharmas, is one of the four kings of Blake's mental world. Vala is his wife. Luvah represents the passionate element in man, either as love or hate. In his noblest aspects he is identified with Christ, in his darker aspects with Satan. Vala symbolizes external nature, or rather man's conception of external nature and the influence of that conception on his life. Like the nature that she represents, she is sometimes beautiful and innocent, at other times cruel, not through malignancy, but with the magnificent indifference which natural forces show toward human suffering.

#### I

#### *[Vala Walks Over the Hills.]*

And she went forth and saw the forms of life and of delight  
 Walking on mountains or flying in the open expanse of heaven.  
 She heard sweet voices in the winds and in the voices of birds  
 That rose from waters; for the waters were as the voice of Luvah,  
 Not seen to her like waters or like this dark world of death,  
 Though all those fair perfections which men know only by name  
 In beautiful substantial forms appeared and served her  
 As food or drink or ornament, or in delightful works  
 To build her bowers. For the elements brought forth abundantly  
 The living soul in glorious forms, and every one came forth  
 Walking before her shadowy face and bowing at her feet.  
 For her delight the horse his proud neck bowed, and his white mane,

And the strong lion deigned in his mouth to wear the golden bit,  
While the far-beaming peacock waited on the fragrant wind  
To bring her fruits of sweet delight from trees of richest wonders,  
And the strong-pinioned eagle bore the fire of heaven in the night  
season.

2

And thus their ancient golden age renewed, for Luvah spoke  
With voice mild from his golden cloud upon the breath of morning.

"Come forth, O Vala! from the grass and from the silent dew;  
Rise from the dews of death, for the Eternal Man is risen."

She rises among flowers and looks toward the eastern clearness,  
She walks, yea runs, her feet are winged on the tops of the bending  
grass,

Her garments rejoice in the vocal wind, and her hair glistens with dew.

She answered thus: "Whose voice is this, in the voice of the nourishing  
air,

In the spirit of the morning, awakening the soul from its grassy bed?

Where dost thou dwell? for it is thee I seek, and but for thee

I must have slept eternally, nor have felt the dew of thy morning.

Look how the opening dawn advances with vocal harmony.

Look how the beams foreshow the rising of some glorious power.

The sun is thine; he goeth forth in his majestic brightness.

O, thou creating voice that callest! and who shall answer thee?

Where dost thou flee, O fair one? where dost thou seek thy happy  
place?

To yonder brightness? There I haste, for sure I came from thence;

Or I must have slept eternally, nor have felt the dew of morning."

"Eternally thou must have slept nor have felt the morning dew,

But for yon nourishing sun; 'tis that by which thou art arisen.

The birds adore the sun; the beasts rise up and play in his beams,

And every flower and every leaf rejoices in his light.

Then, O! thou fair one, sit thee down, for thou art as the grass,

Thou risest in the dew of morning and at night art folded up."

"Alas! am I but as a flower? Then will I sit me down,

Then will I weep, then I'll complain, and sigh for immortality,

And chide my maker,—thee, O sun! that raisedst me to fall."

So saying she sat down and wept beneath the apple-trees.

"O! be thou blotted out, thou sun! that raisedst me to trouble,  
That gavest me a heart to crave, and raisedst me, thy phantom,  
To feel thy heart, and see thy light, and wander here alone,  
Hopeless, if I am like the grass, and so shall pass away."

"Rise, sluggish soul. Why sitt'st thou here? Why dost thou sit and weep?

Yon sun shall wax old and decay, but thou shalt ever flourish.  
The fruit shall ripen and fall down, the flowers consume away,  
But thou shalt still survive. Arise! O dry thy dewy tears."

"Ha! shall I still survive? Whence came that sweet and comforting voice?

And whence that voice of sorrow? O sun! thou art nothing now to me.

Go on thy course rejoicing, and let us both rejoice together.  
I walk among His flocks and hear the bleating of His lambs.  
O! that I could behold His face and follow His pure feet!  
I walk by the footsteps of His flocks. Come hither, tender flocks.  
Can you converse with a pure soul that seeketh for her maker?  
You answer not. Then am I set your mistress in the garden.  
I'll watch you and attend your footsteps. You are not like the birds  
That sing and fly in the bright air; but you do lick my feet  
And let me touch your woolly backs; follow me as I sing;  
For in my bosom a new song arises to my Lord:

Rise up, O sun! most glorious minister and light of day.  
Flow on, ye gentle airs, and bear the voice of my rejoicing.  
Wave freshly, [you] clear waters flowing, around the tender grass.  
And thou, sweet smelling ground, put forth thy life in fruit and flowers.  
Follow me, O my flocks! and hear me sing my rapturous song.  
I will cause my voice to be heard on the clouds that glitter in the sun.  
I will call; and who shall answer me? I shall sing; who shall reply?  
For from my pleasant hills behold the living, living springs,  
Running among my green pastures, delighting among my trees.  
I am not here alone; my flocks, you are my brethren.  
And you, [ye] birds! that sing and adorn the sky, you are my sisters.  
I sing, and you reply to my song; I rejoice, and you are glad.  
Follow me, O my flocks; we will now descend into the valley.  
O, how delicious are the grapes, flourishing in the sun!  
How clear the spring of the rock, running among the golden sand!  
How cool the breezes of the valley! And the arms of the branching trees

Cover us from the sun. Come and let us sit in the shade.  
My Luvah here hath placed me in a sweet and pleasant land,



And given me fruits and pleasant waters, and warm hills and cool valleys.

Here will I build myself a house, and here I'll call on his name,  
Here I'll return when I am weary and take my pleasant rest."

So spoke the sinless soul, and laid her head in the snowy fleece  
Of a curled ram, who stretched himself in sleep beside [his mistress],  
And soft sleep fell upon her eyelids in the silent noon of day.

Then Luvah passèd by, and saw the sinless soul,  
And said: "Let a pleasant house arise to be a dwelling-place  
Of this immortal spirit growing in lower Paradise."  
He spoke, and pillars were builded, and walls, as white as ivory.  
The grass she slept upon was paved with pavement as of pearl.  
Beneath her rose a downy bed, and a ceiling covered all.

Vala awoke. "When in the pleasant gates of sleep I entered,  
I saw my Luvah like a spirit stand in the bright air.  
Round him stood spirits like me, who reared me a bright house,  
And here I see the house remain in my most pleasant world.  
My Luvah smiled. I kneelèd down. He laid his hand on my head,  
And when he laid his hand upon me from the gates of sleep I came  
Into this bodily house to tend my flocks in my pleasant garden."

So saying, she arose and walkèd round her beautiful house;  
And then from her white door she looked to see her bleating lambs,  
But her flocks were gone up from beneath the trees into the hills.  
"I see the hand that leadeth me doth also lead my flocks."  
She went up to her flocks, and turnèd oft to see her shining house.  
She stooped to drink of the clear spring, and eat the grapes and apples.  
She bore the fruits in her lap; she gathered flowers for her bosom.  
She callèd to her flocks, saying, "Follow me, O my Flocks!"  
They followèd her to the silent valley beneath the spreading trees,  
And on the river's margin she ungirded her golden girdle.

She stood in the river and viewèd herself within the wat'ry glass,  
And her bright hair was wet with the waters. She rose up from the  
river,

And as she rose her eyes were opened to the world of waters;  
She saw Tharmas sitting upon the rocks beside the wavy sea.

He stroked the water from his beard and mourned faint through the  
summer valley.

And Vala stood on the rocks of Tharmas and heard the mournful  
voice:

"O, Enion! my weary head is in the bed of death,  
For weeds of death have wrapped around my limbs in the hoary deeps.

I sit in the place of shells and mourn, and thou art closed in clouds.  
When will the time of clouds be past, and the dismal night of  
Tharmas?

Arise, O Enion! arise and smile upon my head,  
As thou dost smile upon the barren mountains, and they rejoice.  
When wilt thou smile on Tharmas, O! thou bringer of golden day?  
Arise, O Enion! arise, for lo! I have calmed my seas."

So saying, his faint head he laid upon the oozy rock,  
And darkness covered all the deep. The light of Enion faded,  
Like a faint flame quivering upon the surface of the darkness.

Then Vala lifted up her hands to heaven to call on Enion.  
She called, but none could answer her, and the echoes her voice  
returned.

"Where is the voice of God that called me from the silent dew?  
Where is the Lord of Vala? Dost thou hide in clefts of the rock?  
Why shouldst thou hide thyself from Vala, from the soul that wanders  
desolate?"

She ceased, and light beamed round her like the glory of the morning.  
And she arose out of the river and girded her golden girdle.  
And now her feet step on the grassy bosom of the ground  
Among her flocks. She turned her eyes toward her pleasant house,  
And saw in the doorway beneath the trees two little children playing.  
She drew near to her house, and her flocks followed in her footsteps.  
The children clung round her knees. She embraced them and wept  
over them.

"Thou, little boy, art Tharmas, and thou, bright girl, Enion.  
How are ye thus renewed and brought into the garden of Vala?"  
She embraced them in tears, till the sun descended the western hills,  
And then she entered her bright house, leading her mighty children.  
And when night came, her flocks laid round the house beneath the  
trees.

She laid the children on the beds which she saw prepared in the house,  
Then last, herself laid down, and closed her eyelids in soft slumbers.  
And in the morning, when the sun arose in the crystal sky,  
Vala awoke, and called her children from their gentle slumbers:  
"Awake, O Enion! awake, and let thine immortal eyes  
Enlighten all the crystal house of Vala! Awake! awake!  
Awake, Tharmas! Awake, awake, thou child of dewy tears.  
Open the orbs of thy blue eyes and smile upon my gardens."

The children awoke and smiled on Vala. She kneeled by the golden couch,  
She pressed them to her bosom, and her pearly tears dropped down.  
"O, my sweet children! Enion, let Tharmas kiss thy cheek.  
Why dost thou turn thyself away from his sweet watery eyes?  
Tharmas, henceforth in Vala's bosom thou shalt find sweet peace.  
O, bless the lovely eyes of Tharmas and the eyes of Enion!"

They rose; they went out wandering, sometimes together, sometimes alone.

"Why weep'st thou, Tharmas, child of tears, in the bright house of joy?"

Doth Enion avoid the sight of thy blue heavenly eyes?  
And dost thou wander with my lambs, and wet their innocent faces  
With thy bright tears, because the steps of Enion are in the gardens?  
Arise, sweet boy, and let us follow the path of Enion."

So saying, they went down into the garden among the fruits,  
And Enion sang among the flowers that grew among the fruits,  
And Vala said: "Go, Tharmas; weep not,—go to Enion."

He said: "O, Vala, I am sick, and all this garden of pleasure  
Swims like a dream before my eyes. But the sweet smiling fruit  
Revives me to new death. I fade, even as a waterlily  
In the sun's heat, till in the night, on the couch of Enion,  
I drink in new life, and feel the breath of sleeping Enion.  
But in the morning she arises to avoid my eyes,  
Then my loins fade, and in the house I sit me down and weep."

"Cheer up thy countenance, bright boy, and go to Enion.  
Tell her that Vala waits her in the shadows of her garden."  
He went with timid steps; and Enion, like the ruddy morn  
When infant spring appears in swelling buds and opening flowers,  
Behind her veil withdraws, so Enion turned her modest head.

But Tharmas spoke: "Vala seeks thee, sweet Enion, in the shades.  
Follow the steps of Tharmas, O! thou brightness of the garden."  
He took her hand reluctant. She followed in infant doubts.  
There in eternal childhood, straying among Vala's flocks,  
In infant sorrow and joy alternate, Enion and Tharmas play'd  
Round Vala, in the garden of Vala, and by her river's margin.



[*The scene here symbolizes some great day of revolution, a movement fraught with both hope and terror. As the symbol of human passion Luvah is god of both love and hate, and appears now in the latter capacity. His wine-presses are probably the hatreds and wars of nations; the grapes are human victims; the wine is blood.*]

Then all the slaves from every earth in the wide Universe  
Sing a new song, drowning confusion in its happy notes,  
So loud, so clear in the wide heavens, and the song that they sang was  
this,

Composed by an African Black from the little earth of Sotha:—

“Aha! Aha! How came I here so soon, in my sweet native land?  
How came I here? Methinks I am as I was in my youth,  
When in my father’s house I heard his cheering voice.  
Methinks I see his flocks and herds and feel my limbs renewed,  
And lo! my brethren in their tents, and their little ones around them!”

The song arose to the golden feast. The Eternal Man rejoiced.  
The Eternal Man said: “Luvah, the vintage is ripe. Arise!  
My flocks and herds trample the corn, my cattle browse upon  
The ripe clusters. The shepherds shout for Luvah, Prince of Love.  
Let the Bulls of Luvah tread the corn and draw the loaded waggon  
Into the barn while children glean the ears around the door.  
Then shall they lift their innocent hands and stroke his furious nose,  
And he shall lick the little girl’s white neck, and on her head  
Scatter the perfumes of his breath, while from his mountains high  
The lion of terror shall come down, and bending his bright mane  
And crouching at their side, shall eat from the curly boy’s white lap  
His golden food, and in the evening sleep before the door.”

“Attempting to be more than man we become less,” said Luvah,  
As he arose from the bright feast, drunk with the wine of ages.  
His crown of thorns fell from his head, he hung his living lyre  
Behind the seat of the Eternal Man, and took his way.  
His sons, arising from the feast with golden baskets, follow,  
A fiery train, as when the Sun sings in the ripe vineyards.

Then Luvah stood before the wine-press. All his fiery sons  
Brought up the loaded waggons with shoutings. Ramping tigers play  
In the jingling traces; furious lions sound the song of joy  
To the golden wheels circling upon the pavement of heaven, and all  
The villages of Luvah rising; the golden tiles of the villages  
Reply to violins and tabors, to the pipe, flute, lyre, and cymbal.  
Down, down, through the immense, with outcry, fury, and despair,

Into the wine-presses of Luvah, howling, fall the clusters  
Of human families through the deep. The wine-presses are filled,  
The blood of life flowed plentiful; odours of life arose  
All round the heavenly arches, and the odours rose singing this song:

“Terrible wine-presses of Luvah! O, caverns of the grave!  
How lovely the delights of those risen again from death!  
O, trembling joy! Excess of joy is like excessive grief.”

So sang the human odours round the wine-presses of Luvah.  
But in the wine-presses is wailing, terror and despair.  
Forsaken of their elements they vanish and are no more—  
No more but a desire of being, a ravening, distracted desire,  
Desiring like the hungry worm, and like the gaping grave.

4

[*This shows the cruel side of nature and of man's study of nature.*]

Now, now the battle rages round thy tender limbs, O Vala,  
Now smile among thy bitter tears, now put on all thy beauty.  
Is not the wound of the sword sweet, and the broken bone delightful?  
Wilt thou now smile among the scythes when the wounded groan in  
the field?

We were carried away in thousands from London, and in tens  
Of thousands from Westminster and Marybone in ships closed up,  
Chain'd hand and foot, compell'd to fight under the iron whips  
Of our captains; fearing our officers more than the enemy.  
Lift up thy blue eyes, Vala, and put on thy sapphire shoes;  
O melancholy Magdalen, behold the morning over Malden break;  
Gird on thy flaming zone, descend into the sepulcher of Canterbury;  
Scatter the blood from thy golden brow, the tears from thy silver  
locks;

Shake off the waters from thy wings, and the dust from thy white  
garments;

Remember all thy feigned terrors on the secret couch of Lambeth's  
Vale,

When the sun rose in glowing morn, with arms of mighty hosts  
Marching to battle, who was wont to rise with Urizen's<sup>1</sup> harps,  
Girt as a sower with his seed to scatter life abroad over Albion.  
Arise, O Vala, bring the bow of Urizen; bring the swift arrows of  
light.

How rag'd the golden horses of Urizen, compelled to the chariot of  
love,

<sup>1</sup> Spirit of intellect.



Compell'd to leave the plow to the ox, to snuff up the winds of desolation,  
 To trample the corn-fields in boastful neighings; this is no gentle harp,  
 This is no warbling brook, nor shadow of a myrtle tree;  
 But blood and wounds and dismal cries, and shadows of the oak;  
 And hearts laid open to the light by the broad, grisly sword;  
 And bowels hid in hammer'd steel ripp'd quivering on the ground.  
 Call forth thy smiles of soft deceit, call forth thy cloudy tears;  
 We hear thy sighs in trumpets shrill when man shall blood renew.

## VII

### FROM THE STORY OF URIZEN AND AHANIA

Urizen, another of the four kings of Blake's mythology, represents the demonstrative and dogmatic sides of intellect, as opposed to the imaginative and intuitive. In his proper sphere he is a good power; but out of his proper sphere, as he usually is in Blake's myth, he is a well-meaning, misguided tyrant, building up mistaken systems with endless industry amid the misery of his victims. This side of his nature symbolizes the dogmatic theologian, the dogmatic scientist, and the pseudo-classic critic of art and poetry. Ahania, "the bright one," is his wife, and perhaps the most touching and human of all Blake's female abstractions. The pathos of a woman's heart trying in vain to solace itself with things of the intellect merely goes with her wherever she appears.

#### I

#### [*The First Appearance of Urizen.*]

Lo, a Shadow of horror is risen  
 In Eternity! unknown, unprolific,  
 Self-clos'd, all-repelling. What Demon  
 Hath form'd this abominable void,  
 This soul-shudd'ring vacuum? Some said  
 It is Urizen. But unknown, abstracted,  
 Brooding secret, the dark power hid.

Times on times he divided, and measur'd  
 Space by space in his ninefold darkness,  
 Unseen, unknown; changes appear'd  
 Like desolate mountains rifted furious  
 By the black winds of perturbation.

For he strove in battles dire,  
In unseen confictions with shapes  
Bred from his forsaken wilderness;  
Of beast, bird, fish, serpent, and element,  
Combustion, blast, vapour, and cloud.

Dark, revolving in silent activity,  
Unseen in tormenting passions;  
An activity unknown and horrible;  
A self-contemplating shadow,  
In enormous labours occupièd.

But Eternals beheld his vast forests;  
Ages on ages he lay, clos'd, unknown,  
Brooding, shut in the deep; all avoid  
The petrific, abominable chaos.

His cold horrors silent, dark Urizen  
Prepar'd; his ten thousands of thunders  
Rang'd in gloom'd array stretch out across  
The dread world; and the rolling of wheels,  
As of swelling seas, sound in his clouds,  
In his hills of stor'd snows, in his mountains  
Of hail and ice; voices of terror  
Are heard, like thunders of autumn,  
When the cloud blazes over the harvests.

2

[*The Descent of Urizen's Army.*]

Ten thousand thousand were his hosts of spirits on the wind,  
Ten thousand thousand glittering chariots shining in the sky.  
They pour upon the golden shore beside the silent ocean,  
Rejoicing in the victory, and the heavens were filled with blood,  
The Earth spread forth her table wide. The Night, a silver cup  
Filled with the wine of anguish,—waited at the golden feast.  
But the bright sun was not as yet. He, filling all the expanse,  
Slept as a bird in the blue shell that soon shall burst away.

3

[*Ahania, Driven Away by Urizen, Wanders in the Abyss.*]

The lamenting voice of Ahania,  
Weeping upon the void!  
Distant in solitary night

Her voice was heard; but no form  
Had she; but her tears from clouds  
Eternal fell round the Tree.

And the voice cried: "Ah, Urizen! Love!  
Flower of morning! I weep on the verge  
Of Non-entity; how wide the Abyss  
Between Ahania and thee!

I lie on the verge of the deep;  
I see thy dark clouds ascend;  
I see thy black forests and floods,  
A horrible waste to my eyes!

Weeping I walk over rocks,  
Over dens, and thro' valleys of death.  
Why didst thou despise Ahania,  
To cast me from thy bright presence  
Into the World of Loneness?

I cannot touch his hand,  
Nor weep on his knees, nor hear  
His voice and bow, nor see his eyes  
And joy; nor hear his footsteps, and  
My heart leaps at the lovely sound!  
I cannot kiss the place  
Whereon his bright feet have trod.  
But I wander on the rocks  
With hard necessity.

Where is my golden palace,  
Where my ivory bed?  
Where the joy of my morning hour,  
Where the sons of eternity singing,

To awake bright Urizen, my king,  
To arise to the mountain sport,  
To the bliss of eternal valleys;

To awake my king in the morn,  
To embrace Ahania's joy  
On the breath of his open bosom;  
From my soft cloud of dew to fall  
In showers of life on his harvests?

When he gave my happy soul  
To the sons of eternal joy,  
When he took the daughter of life  
Into my chambers of love;

When I found babes of bliss on my beds  
And bosoms of milk in my chambers,  
Fill'd with eternal seed—  
O! eternal births sung round Ahania,  
In interchange sweet of their joys.

Swell'd with ripeness and fat with fatness,  
Bursting on winds my odours,  
My ripe figs and rich pomegranates,  
In infant joy at thy feet,  
O Urizen, sported and sang.

Then thou with thy lap full of seed,  
With thy hand full of generous fire,  
Walked forth from the clouds of morning  
On the virgins of springing joy,  
On the human soul to cast  
The seed of eternal science.

The sweat poured down thy temples,  
To Ahania returned in evening;  
The moisture awoke to birth,  
My mother's-joys, sleeping in bliss.

But now alone, over rocks, mountains,  
Cast out from thy lovely bosom!  
Cruel jealousy, selfish fear,  
Self-destroying! how can delight  
Renew in these chains of darkness,  
Where bones of beasts are strown  
On the bleak and snowy mountains,  
Where bones from the birth are buried  
Before they see the light?"

4

[*Ahania, Reconciled to Urizen, Attempts to Comfort Him in His Anxiety.*]

Now sat the King of Light upon his starry throne,  
And bright Ahania bow'd herself before his splendid feet.  
"O Urizen, look on thy wife, that like a mournful stream



Embraces round thy knees and wets her bright hair with her tears.  
Why sighs my lord? Are not the morning stars thy obedient sons?  
Do they not bow their bright heads at thy voice, at thy command  
Do they not fly into their stations and return their light to thee?  
The immortal Atmospheres are thine. There thou art seen in glory  
Surrounded by the ever-changing daughters of the light.  
Thou sitst in harmony, for God hath set thee over all.  
Why wilt thou look upon futurity darkening present joy?"

She ceased. The Prince of Light obscured the splendour of his crown,  
Infolded in thick clouds from which his mighty voice went forth.  
"O bright Ahania, a boy is born of the dark ocean  
Whom Urizen doth serve with light replenishing his darkness.  
I am set here a king of trouble, commanded here to serve  
And do my ministry to those who eat of my wide Table.  
All this is mine, yet I must serve, and that Prophetic boy  
Must grow up to command his prince; but hear my determined  
decree: . . .

Alas for me! What will become of me at that dread time?"

Ahania bowed her head and wept seven days before the King,  
And on the eighth day, when his clouds unfolded from his throne,  
She raised her bright head sweet perfumèd, and with heavenly voice:

"O Prince, the Eternal One hath set thee leader of his hosts,  
Raise then thy radiant eyes to him, raise thy obedient hands,  
And comfort shall descend from heaven into thy darkening clouds.  
Leave all futurity to him. Resume thy fields of light.  
Why didst thou listen to the voice of Luvah that dread morn  
To give the immortal steeds of light to his deceitful hands?  
No longer now obedient to thy will, thou art compelled  
To forge the curbs of iron and brass, to build them iron mangers,  
To feed them with intoxication from the wine-press of Luvah,  
Till the Divine Vision and Fruition is quite obliterated.  
They call thy lions to the field of blood. They rouse thy tigers  
Out of the halls of justice, till their dens thy windows framed  
Golden and beautiful, but oh how unlike those sweet fields of bliss  
Where liberty was justice, and eternal science was mercy."

5

*[Urizen wanders through a dark, chaotic world, the realms of his brother kings, Luvah, Tharmas, and Urthona. These chaotic deserts symbolize man's mental state when faith and imagination no longer play their proper part in his life. In one of these regions he finds Orc, the personification of fierce human passion, bound down on the rocks like a Prometheus.]*



*Here, also, as reason, he struggles with sensuousness (Tharmas) and with restless energy (Urthona). In the midst of these dark wastes Urizen builds his own new universe, which, like all creations of the intellect alone, is impressive but cold and terrible in its stony indifference to emotion.]*

The woes of Urizen shut up in the deep dens of Urthona.

"Ah! how shall Urizen the king submit to this dark mansion?  
Ah! how is this? Once on the heights I stretched my throne sublime;  
The mountains of Urizen, once of silver, where the sons of wisdom  
dwelt,

And on whose tops the virgins sang, are rocks of desolation.

My fountains, once the haunt of swans, now breed the scaly tortoise,  
The houses of my harpers are become a haunt of crows,  
The gardens of wisdom are become a field of horrid graves,  
And on the bones I drop my tears and water them in vain.

Once how I walkèd from my palace in gardens of delight!  
The sons of wisdom stood around, the harpers followed with harps,  
Nine virgins clothed in light composed the song to their immortal  
voices,

And at my banquet of new wine my head was crowned with joy.

Then in my ivory pavilions I slumbered in the noon  
And walkèd in the silent night among sweet-smelling flowers,  
Till on my silver bed I slept and sweet dreams round me hovered;  
But now my land is darkened and my wise men are departed.

My songs are turnèd to cries of lamentation  
Heard on my mountains, and deep sighs under my palace roofs,  
Because the steeds of Urizen, once swifter than the light,  
Were kept back from my lord and from his chariot of mercies.

O, did I keep the horses of the day in silver pastures?  
O, I refused the Lord of Day the horses of his Prince!  
O, did I close my treasuries with roofs of solid stone  
And darkened all my palace walls with envyings and hate?

O, fool! to think that I could hide from his all-piercing eyes  
The gold and silver and costly stones, his holy workmanship!  
O, fool! could I forget the light that fillèd my bright spheres  
Was a reflection of his face who called me from the deep!

I well remember, for I heard the mild and holy voice  
Saying, 'Light, spring up and shine,' and I sprang up from the deep.  
He gave to me a silver sceptre and crowned me with a golden crown,  
And said, 'Go forth and guide my son who wanders on the ocean.'

I went not forth, I hid myself in black clouds of my wrath;  
I called the stars around my feet in the night of councils dark,  
The stars threw down their spears and fled naked away.  
We fell. I seized thee, dark Urthona, in my left hand falling.

I seized thee, beauteous Luvah; thou art faded like a flower  
And like a lily thy wife Vala, withered by [the] winds.  
When thou didst bear the golden cup at the immortal tables,  
Thy children smote their fiery wings, crowned with the gold of heaven.

Thy pure feet stepped on the steps divine, too pure for other feet,  
And thy fair locks shadowed thine eyes from this divine effulgence.  
And thou didst keep with strong Urthona the living gates of heaven,  
But now thou art bowed down with him, even to the gates of hell.

Because thou gavest Urizen the wine of the Almighty  
For steeds of light that they might run in the golden chariot of pride,  
I gave to thee the steeds, I poured the stolen wine,  
And drunken with the immortal draught fell from my throne sublime.

I will arise, explore these dens, and find that deep pulsation  
That shakes my cavern with strong shudders. Perhaps this is the  
night  
Of prophecy, and Luvah hath burst his way from Enitharmon."

So Urizen arose, leaning on his spear explored his dens.  
He threw his flight through the dark air to where a river flowed,  
And taking off his silver helmet filled it and drank;  
But when, unsated his thirst, he assayed to gather more,  
Lo, three terrific women at the verge of the bright flood,  
Who would not suffer him to approach but drove him back with  
storm.

Urizen knew them not, and thus addressed the spirits of darkness:  
"Who art thou, eldest woman, wrapped in thy clouds?  
What is that name written on thy forehead? What art thou?  
And wherefore dost thou pour this water forth in sighs and care?"  
She answered not, but filled her urn and poured it forth abroad.

"Answer[est] thou not?" said Urizen. "Then thou must answer me,  
Thou terrible woman clad in blue, whose strong attractive power  
Draws all into a fountain at the rock of thy attraction,  
With frowning brow thou sittest, mistress of these mighty waters."  
She answered not, but stretched her arms and threw her limbs abroad.

"Or wilt thou answer, youngest woman, clad in shining green?  
With labour and care thou dost divide the current into four.  
Queen of these dreadful rivers, speak, and let me hear thy voice."

Then Urizen raised his spear, but they reared up a wall of rock.  
They gave a scream—they knew their father; Urizen knew his daughters.

They shrank into their channels dry,—the strand beneath his feet,—  
Hiding themselves in rocky forms from the eyes of Urizen.

Then Urizen wept, and thus his lamentations poured forth:

“O, horrible! O, dreadful state! Those whom I lovèd best,  
On whom I poured the branches of my light, adorning them  
With jewels and jealous ornament laboured with art divine,  
Vests of the radiant colours of heaven and crowns of golden fire,—  
I gave sweet lilies to their breasts and roses to their hair,  
I taught them songs of sweet delight, I gave them tender voices  
Into the blue expanse, and I invented, with laborious art,  
Sweet instruments of sound. In pride encompassing my knees  
They poured their radiance above all. The Daughters of Luvah  
                  envied

At their exceeding brightness, and the Sons of Eternity sent them gifts.

Now will I pour my fury on them, and I will reverse  
The precious benediction. For their colours of loveliness  
I will [give] blackness; for jewelry, hoary frost; for ornament,  
                  deformity. . . .

For laboured flattery, care and sweet instruction.” . . .

On his way

He took, high sounding over hills and deserts, floods and horrible  
                  chasms.

Infinite was his labour, without end his travel. He strove  
In vain, for hideous monsters of the deep annoyed him sore,—  
Scaled and finned with iron and brass, they devoured the path before  
                  him.

Incessant was the conflict. On he bent his weary steps,  
Making a path toward the dark world of Urthona. He rose  
With pain upon the weary mountains, and with pain descended,  
And saw their grisly fears, and his eyes sickened at the sight,  
The howlings, gnashings, groanings, shriekings, shudderings, sobbings,  
                  burstings,

Mingled together, to create a world for Los.<sup>1</sup> In cruel delight  
Los brooded on the darkness, nor saw Urizen's globe of fire  
Lighting his dismal journey through the pathless world of death,  
Writing in bitter tears and groans in books of iron and brass  
The enormous wonders of the Abysses, once his brightest joy.

For Urizen beheld the terrors of the Abyss<sup>2</sup> wandering among

<sup>1</sup> Los = the spirit of Time.

<sup>2</sup> The next thirty or forty lines may represent the ideas of persecution, renunciation, and eternal torment evolved in religion by the misguided intellect.



The ruined spirits once his children, and the children of Luvah,  
Scared at the sound of their sigh that seemed to shake the immense.  
They wander moping, in their heart a sun, a dreary moon,  
An universe of fiery constellations in their brain,  
An earth of wintry woe beneath their feet, and round their loins  
Waters or winds, or clouds, or brooding lightnings and pestilential  
plagues.

Beyond the bounds of their own self their senses cannot penetrate.  
As the tree knoweth not what is outside its leaves and bark,  
And yet it drinks the summer joy and fears the winter sorrow;  
So in the regions of the grave none knows his dark compeer  
Though he partakes of his dire woes, and mutual returns the pang,  
The throb, the dolour, the convulsion, in soul-sickening woes;  
The horrid shapes and sights of torment in burning dungeons and in  
Fetters of red-hot iron, some with crowns of serpents and some  
With monsters girding round their bosoms; some lying in beds of  
sulphur,

On racks and wheels. He beheld women marching in burning wastes  
Of sand in bands of hundreds, and of fifties, and of thousands, stricken  
with

Lightnings which blazèd after them upon their shoulders in their  
march,

In successive volleys, with loud thunder. Swift flew the king of light  
Over the burning deserts. Then the deserts passed in clouds  
Of smoke, with myriads moping in the stifling vapours. Swift  
Flew the king, though flagged his powers, labouring, till over rocks  
And mountains, faint, weary, he wandered where multitudes were shut  
Up in the solid mountains, and in rocks heaved with their torment.  
Then came he among fiery cities and castles built of burning steel;  
There he beheld the forms of Tigers and of Lions, dishumanized men,  
Many in serpents and in worms stretched out enormous length  
Over the sullen mould, and slimy tracks obstruct his way  
Drawn out from deep to deep; woven and ribbed  
And scalèd monsters or armed in iron shell, or shell of brass  
Or gold, a glittering torment shining and hissing in eternal pain.  
His voice to them was but an inarticulate thunder, for their ears  
Were heavy and dull and their eyes and nostrils closèd up.  
Oft he stood by a howling victim, questioning in words  
Soothing or furious. No one answered; every one wrapped up  
In his own sorrow howled regardless of his words, nor voice  
Or sweet response could he obtain, though oft assayed with tears.  
He knew they were his children ruined in his ruined world.  
Oft would he stand and question a fierce scorpion glowing with gold  
In vain; the terror heard not. Then a lion he would seize  
By the fierce mane, staying his howling course; in vain the voice

Of Urizen, in vain the eloquent tongue. A rock, a cloud, a mountain  
Were now not vocal as in climes of happy eternity;  
Where the lamb replies to the infant's voice and the lion to the wail  
of ewes,  
Giving them sweet instructions, when the cloud, the furrows and the  
field  
Talk with the husbandman and shepherd. But these attacked him  
sore,  
Seizing upon his feet, and rending the sinews, that in caves  
He had to revive his obstructed power with rest and oblivion.

Then he had time enough to repent of his rashly threatened curse.  
He saw them accursed beyond his curse; his soul melted with fear.  
He could not take their fetters off, for they grew to the soul,  
Nor could he quench the fires, for they flamed out of the heart.  
Nor could he calm the elements, because himself was subject,  
So he threw his flight in terror and pain, and in repentant tears.

When he had passed the Southern terrors he approached the East,  
Void, pathless, beaten with eternal sleet, and eternal hail and rain.  
No form was there, no living thing, and yet his way lay through  
This dismal world. He stood awhile and looked back over his former  
Terrific voyages—hills and dales of torment and despair—  
Sighing, and weeping a fresh tear. Then turning round he threw  
Himself into the dismal void. Falling he fell and fell,  
Whirling in irresistible revolutions down and down  
In the horrid bottomless vacuity, falling, falling, falling,  
Into the Eastern vacuity, the empty world of Luvah.

The Ever-pitying One who seeth all things, saw his fall,  
And in the dark vacuity created a bosom of clay.  
When wearied—dead—he fell, his limbs reposed in the bosom of  
slime.

As the seed falls from the sower's hand, so Urizen fell, and death  
Shut up his powers in oblivion. Then as the seed shoots forth  
In pain and sorrow, so the slimy bed his limbs renewed.  
At first an infant-weakness period passed. He gathered strength,  
But still in solitude he sat; then rising, threw his flight  
Onward, though falling, through the waste of night and ending in  
death,

And in another resurrection to sorrow and weary travail.  
But still his books he bore in his strong hands, and his iron pen,  
For when he died they lay beside his grave, and when he rose  
He seized them with a gloomy smile, for wrapped in his death-clothes  
He hid them when he slept in death. When he revived the clothes  
Were rollèd by the winds; the clothes remained still unconsumed,



Still to be written and interleaved with brass and iron and gold,  
Time after time, for such a journey none but iron pens  
Can write, and adamantine leaves receive, nor can the man who goes  
The journey obstinate refuse to write, time after time.  
Endless had been his travail, but the Divine Hand him led,  
For infinite the distance and obscured by combustion dire.  
By rocky masses frowning in the abyss revolving erratic,  
Round lakes of fire in this dark deep, the ruins of Urizen's world.

Oft would he sit in a dark rift and regulate his books,  
Or sleep such sleep as spirits eternal wearied in the dark,  
Tearful, and sorrowful, taste; then rise, look out and ponder  
His dismal voyage, eying the next sphere though far remote,  
Then darting into the abyss of night his venturous limbs  
Through lightnings, thunders, earthquakes and confusion, fires and  
floods,

Stemming his downward fate, labouring up against futurity,  
Creating many a vortex, fixing many a science in the deep,  
And thence throwing his venturous limbs into the vast unknown.

But Urizen said: "Can I not leave this world of cumbrous wheels,  
Circle over circle, nor on high attain a void  
Where self-sustaining I may view all things beneath my feet?  
O, what a world is here, and how unlike those climes of bliss  
Where my sons gathered round my knees! O, thou poor ruined  
world,

Thou horrible ruin! Once, like me, thou wast all glorious,  
And now, like me, partaking desolate thy master's lot.  
Art thou, O ruin, the once glorious heaven on these thy rocks  
Where joy sang on the trees and pleasure sported in the rivers,  
And laughter sat beneath the oaks, and innocence sported round  
Upon the green plains, and sweet friendship met in palaces,  
And books and instruments of song and pictures of delight?  
Where are they? Whelmed beneath these ruins, in horrible destruc-  
tion.

And if, eternal-falling, I repose on the dark bosom  
Of winds and waters, or thence fall into the void where air  
Is not, downfalling through immensity ever and ever,  
How my powers weakened every revolution, till a death  
Shut up my powers; then a seed in the vast womb of darkness,  
I dwell in dim oblivion brooding. Over me, the enormous worlds  
Reorganize in shooting forth, in bones and flesh and blood.  
I am regenerate, to fall, or rise, at will, or to remain  
A labourer of ages, a dire discontent, a living awe  
Wandering in vain. Here will I fix my foot and here re-build.  
These mountains of brass promise much riches in their deepest bosom."

So saying, he began to form of gold, silver and iron  
And brass, vast instruments to measure out the immense and fix  
The whole into another world better, and made to obey  
His will, where none should dare oppose his will, himself being king  
Of all, and all futurity he bound in his vast chain.  
And the sciences were fixed and the vortexes began to operate  
On all the sons of men; and every human soul terrified  
At the living wheels of heaven shrunk inward, withering away.  
For Urizen lamented over them in a selfish lamentation  
Till a white woof covered his limbs from head to foot,  
Hair white as snow covered him in flaky locks terrific,  
Overspreading his limbs. In pride he wandered weeping  
Clothed in an aged venerableness, obstinately resolved,  
Travelling through darkness, and wherever he travelled a dire web  
Followed behind him, as the web of a spider dusky and cold,  
Shivering across vortex to vortex, drawn out from his mantle of years,  
A living mantle adjoined to his life and growing from his soul;  
And the web of Urizen stretched, direful, shivering, as clouds,  
And uttering such woes, and bursting [with] such thunderings.

And now he came into the abhorrèd world of dark Urthona,  
Into the doleful vales where no tree grew or river flowed,  
No man nor beast nor creeping thing, nor sun nor cloud nor star,  
Till he with his globe of fire immense, held in his venturous hand,  
Bore on through the affrighted vales, ascending and descending;  
O'erwearied and in cumbrous flight he ventured o'er dark rifts,  
Or down dark precipices, or climbed with pain and labour high,  
Till he beheld the world of Los from the peaked rock of Urthona,  
And heard the howling of red Orc distincter and distincter.

Redoubling his immortal effort, through the narrow vales  
With difficulty down descending, guided by his ear  
And by his globe of fire, he went down the vale of Urthona  
Between the enormous iron walls built by the Spectre; dark,  
Dark grew his globe reddening with mists, and full before his path,  
Standing across the narrow vale the shadow of Urthona  
A spectre vast appeared, whose legs and feet, with iron scaled,  
Stamped the hard rocks expectant of the unknown wanderer  
Whom he had seen wandering his nether world when distant far,  
And watched his swift approach. Collected, dark, the spectre stood.  
Beside him Tharmas stayed his flight and stood with stern defiance,  
Communing with the spectre who rejoiced along the vale.  
Around his loins a girdle glowed with many coloured fires,  
And in his hand a knotted club whose knots like mountains frowned,  
Desert among the stars there withering with its ridges cold.

Black scales of iron arm the dread image. Iron spikes instead  
Of hair shoot from his orbèd skull; his glowing eyes  
Burned like two furnaces. He called with voice of thunder;  
Four wingèd heralds mount the furious blast and blow their trumps;  
Gold, silver, brass, and iron clangours, clamouring, rend the shore.  
Like white clouds rising from the vales, his fifty-two armies  
From the four cliffs of Urthona rise glowing around the spectre.  
Four sons of Urizen the squadrons of Urthona led, in arms  
Of gold and silver, brass and iron; he knew his mighty sons.

Then Urizen arose upon the wind, back many a mile,  
Returning into his dire web, scattering fleecy snows  
As he ascended howling. Loud the net vibrated strong.  
From heaven to heaven and globe to globe its vast eccentric paths,  
Compulsive rolled the comets at his dread command the dreary way,  
Falling with wheel impetuous down among Urthona's vales  
And round red Orc, returning back to Urizen, gorged with blood.  
Slow roll the massy globes at his command, and slow o'erwheel,  
The dismal squadrons of Urthona weaving the dire web  
In this progression, and preparing Urthona's path before him.

Then Urizen rose. The spectre fled, and Tharmas fled;  
The darkening spectre of Urthona hid beneath a rock.  
Tharmas threw his impetuous flight through the deeps of immensity  
Revolving round in whirlpools fierce all round the caverned worlds.

Urizen, silent, descended to the caves of Orc, and saw  
A caverned universe of flaming fire. The horses of Urizen  
Here bound to fiery mangers, furious dash their golden hoofs,  
Striking fierce sparkles from their golden fetters. Fierce his lions  
Howl in the burning dens; his tigers roam on the redounding smoke  
In forests of affliction. The adamantine scales of justice  
Consuming in the raging lamps of mercy, poured in rivers  
The holy oil rages through all the caverned rocks. Fierce flames  
Dance on the rivers and the rocks, howling and drunk with fury.  
The plough of ages and the golden harrow wade through fields  
Of gory blood. The immortal seed is nourished for the slaughter.  
The bulls of Luvah, breathing fire, bellow on burning pastures  
Around howling Orc, whose awful limbs cast forth red smoke and fire,  
That Urizen approached not near but took his seat on a rock  
And ranged his books around him, brooding envious over Orc.

Howling and rending his dark caves the awful demon lay.  
Pulse after pulse beat on his fetters, pulse after pulse his spirit  
Dashed and dashed higher and higher to the shrine of Enitharmon,  
As when the thunder folds himself in thickest clouds,



The watery nations couch and hide in the profoundest deeps,  
Then bursting from his troubled head, with terrible visages and flaming hair,  
His swift-winged daughters sweep across the vast blue ocean.

Los felt the envy in his limbs, like to a blighted tree;  
For Urizen fixed in envy sat brooding and covered with snow,  
His book of iron on his knees. He traced the dreadful letters  
While his snows fell and his storms beat to cool the flames of Orc,  
Age after age, till underneath his heel a deadly root  
Struck through the rock,—the root of Mystery, accursed, shooting up  
Branches into the heaven of Los, then pipe-formed bending down  
Take root again wherever they touch, again branching forth  
In intricate labyrinths overspreading many a grisly deep.

Amazèd started Urizen, when he found himself compassed round  
And high roofed over with the trees. He arose, but now the stems  
Stood so thick, he with difficulty and with great pain brought  
His books out of the dismal shade,—all but the book of iron.

Again he took his seat, he ranged his books around  
On a rock of iron frowning over the foaming fires of Orc.  
And Urizen hung over Orc and viewed his terrible wrath,  
Sitting upon an iron crag. At length his words broke forth:

“Image of dread, whence art thou? Whence is thy most woeful place?  
Whence these fierce fires, but from thyself? No other living thing  
In all the chasm I behold. No other living thing  
Dare thy most terrible wrath abide, bound here to waste in pain  
Thy vital substance in these fires that issue new and new  
Around thee. Sometimes like a flood, and sometimes like a rock  
Of living pangs, thy horrible bed glowing with ceaseless fires  
Beneath thee and around. Above, a shower of fire now beats  
Moulded to globes and arrowy wedges, rending thy bleeding limbs;  
And now a whirling pillar of burning sand to overwhelm thee,  
Steeping thy wounds in salts infernal and in bitter anguish.  
And now a rock moves on the surface of this lake of fire  
To bear thee down beneath the waves in stifling despair.  
Pity for thee moved me to break my dark and long repose,  
And to reveal myself before thee in a form of wisdom.  
Yet thou dost laugh at all these tortures, and this horrible place,  
Yet throw[est] these fires abroad, that back return upon thee,  
While thou reposest, throwing rage on rage, feeding thyself  
With visions of sweet bliss far other than this burning clime.  
Sure thou art bathed in rivers of delight on verdant fields,  
Walking in joy in bright expanses, sleeping on bright clouds,

With visions of delight so lovely that they urge thy rage  
Tenfold with fierce desire to rend thy chains and howl in fury,  
And dire oblivion of all woe and desperate repose,—  
Or is thy joy founded on torment that others bear for thee?"

Orc answered: "Curse thy hoary brows, what dost thou in this deep?  
Thy pity I condemn. Scatter thy snows elsewhere.  
I rage in the deep, for lo, my feet and hands are nailed to the burning  
rock,  
Yet my fierce fires are better than thy snows. Shuddering thou sitt'st.  
Thou art not chained. Why shouldst thou sit, cold, grovelling demon  
of woe,

In torture of dire coldness? Now a lake of water deep  
Sweeps over thee, freezing to solid. Still thou sitt'st, closed up  
In that transparent rock as if in joy of thy bright prison,  
Till, overburdened, with its own weight, down through immensity,  
With a crash breaking across, the horrible mass comes down,  
Thundering; and hail and frozen iron hailed from the element,  
Rend thy white hair. Yet thou dost, fixèd, obdurate, brooding, sit  
Writing thy books. Anon a cloud, filled with a waste of snow,  
Covers thee. Still obdurate, still resolved, and writing still,  
Though rocks roll o'er thee, though floods pour, though winds black  
as the sea

Cut thee in gashes, though the blood pour down around thy ancles,  
Freezing thy feet to the hard rock! Still thy pen obdurate  
Traces the wonders of Futurity in horrible fear of the future.  
I rage furious in the deep; for lo, my feet and hands are nailed  
To the hard rock, or thou shouldst feel my enmity and hate  
In all the diseases of man falling upon thy grey accursed front."

Urizen answered: "Read my books, explore my constellations,  
Enquire of my sons and they shall teach thee how to war.  
Enquire of my daughters, who, accursed in the dark deeps,  
Knead bread of sorrow by my stern command, for I am god  
Of all this dreadful ruin. Rise, O daughters, at my stern command."

Rending the rocks, Eleth and Uvith rose, and Ona rose,  
Terrific with their iron vessels, driving them across  
In the dim air. They locked the book of iron, and placed above  
On clouds of death, and sang their songs, kneading the bread of Orc.

Orc listened to the song, compelled, hungering on the cold wind  
That swaggèd heavy with the accursed dough. The hoar frost raged  
Through Ona's sieve. The torrent rain poured from the iron pail  
Of Eleth, and the icy hands of Uvith kneaded the bread.



The heavens bow with terror underneath these iron hands,  
Singing at their dire work the words of Urizen's book of iron,  
While the enormous scrolls rolled dreadful in the heavens above;  
And still the burden of their song in tears was poured forth:  
"The bread is kneaded, let us rest, O cruel father of children!"

But Urizen remitted not their labours upon his rock,  
And Urizen read in his book of brass in sounding tones:  
"Listen, O daughters, to my voice; listen to the words of wisdom.  
Compel the Poor to live upon a crust of bread by soft, mild arts;  
So shall [you] govern over all. Let moral duty tune your tongue,  
But be your hearts harder than the nether millstone."

6

*[Freed from the chaotic darkness, Urizen now builds on a vaster plan,  
but still with the same cruel and fatal lack of emotion.]*

Then were the furnaces unsealed with spades and pickaxes,  
Roaring let out the fluid. The molten metal ran in channels  
Cut by the plough of ages, held in Urizen's strong hand  
In many a valley, for the bulls of Luvah dragged the plough.  
With trembling horror, pale, aghast, the children of Man  
Stood on the infinite earth and saw these visions in the air,  
In waters, and in earth beneath. They cried to one another,  
"What, are we terrors to one another? Come, O brethren, wherefore  
Was this wide earth spread all abroad? Not for wild beasts to roam."  
But many stood silent, and busied in their families.  
And many said, "We see no visions in the darkened air.  
Measure the course of that sulphur orb that lights the darksome day.  
Set stations on the breeding earth and let us buy and sell."  
Others arose, and schools erected, forming instruments  
To measure out the course of heaven. Stern Urizen beheld  
In woe his brethren and his sons in darkening woe lamenting  
Upon the winds in clouds involved; uttering his voice in thunder,  
Commanding all the work with care and power and severity.

Then seized the lions of Urizen their work, and heated in the forge  
Roar the bright masses. Thundering beat the hammers. Many a  
pyramid  
Is formed and thrown down thundering into the deeps of nonentity.  
Heated red-hot they, hissing, rend their way down many a league  
Till resting each his center finds. Suspended there they stand  
Casting their sparkles dire abroad into the dismal deep.  
For, measured out in ordered spaces, the sons of Urizen

With compasses divide the deep. They the strong scales erect  
That Luvah rent from the faint heart of the Fallen Man,  
And weigh the massy cubes, then fix them in their awful stations.

And all the time in caverns shut the golden looms erected,  
First span, then wove the atmospheres. Then the spider and worm  
Plied the winged shuttle, piping shrill through all the listening threads,  
Beneath the caverns roll the weights of lead and spindles of iron,  
The enormous warp and woof rage direful on the affrighted deep.

While far into the vast unknown the strong-winged eagles bend  
Their venturous flight in human forms distinct through darkness deep.  
Their bear the woven draperies. On golden hooks they hang abroad  
The universal curtains, and spread out from sun to sun  
The vehicles of light. They separate the furious particles  
Into mild currents as the water mingles with the wine.

While thus the spirits of strongest wing enlighten the dark deep,  
The threads are spun and the cords twisted and drawn out. Then  
the weak

Begin their work and many a net is netted, many a net  
Spread, and many a spirit caught; innumerable the nets,  
Innumerable the gins and traps, and many a soothing flute  
Is formed, and many a corded lyre outspread over the immense.  
In cruel delight they trap the listeners, and in cruel delight  
Bind them, condensing the strong energies into little compass.  
Some became seed of every plant that shall be planted; some  
The bulbous roots thrown up together into barns and garner.

Then rose the builders. First the Architect divine his plan  
Unfolds, and the wondrous scaffold reared all round the infinite.  
Quadrangular the building rose, the heavens squared by a line,  
Trigons and cubes divide the elements in finite bonds.  
Multitudes without number work incessant, the hewn stone  
Is placed in beds of mortar mingled with the ashes of Vala.  
Severe the labour. Female slaves the mortar trod oppressed.

Twelve halls after the names of his twelve sons composed  
The wondrous building, and three central domes after the names  
Of his three daughters were encompassed by the twelve bright halls;  
Every hall surrounded by a bright paradise of delight,  
In which were towns and cities, nations, seas, mountains and rivers.  
Each dome opened towards four halls, and the three domes encom-  
passed

The Golden Hall of Urizen, whose western side glowed bright  
With ever-streaming fires beaming from his awful limbs.

His Shadowy Feminine Semblance here reposed on a white couch,  
Or hovered over his starry head, and when he smiled she brightened  
Like a bright cloud in harvest; but when Urizen frowned she wept  
In mists over his carved throne. And when he turned his back  
Upon his golden hall and sought the labyrinthine porches  
Of his wide heaven, trembling, cold, in palsy fears she sat  
A shadow of despair. Therefore toward the west Urizen formed  
A recess in the wall for fires to glow upon the pale  
Female, lonely in his absence, and her daughters oft upon  
A golden altar burned perfumes with art celestial formed  
Foursquare, sculptured and sweetly engraved to please their shadowy  
mother.

Ascending into her misty garments the blue smoke rolled to revive  
Her cold limbs in the absence of her lord. Also her sons  
With lives of victims sacrificed upon an altar of brass,  
On the East side revived her soul with lives of beasts and birds  
Slain on the altar, up ascending into her cloudy bosom:—  
Of terrible workmanship the altar, labour of ten thousand slaves,  
One thousand men of wondrous power spent their lives in its formation.

It stood on twelve steps named after her twelve sons,  
And was erected at the chief entrance of Urizen's hall.

When Urizen returned from his immense labours and travels,  
Descending she reposed beside him, folding him around  
In her bright skirts. Astonished and confounded he beheld  
Her shadowy form now separate. He shuddered and was silent.  
Till her caresses and her tears revived him to life and joy.

But infinitely beautiful the wondrous work arose  
In sorrow and care, a golden world whose porches round the heaven,  
And pillar'd halls and rooms received the eternal wandering stars.  
A wondrous golden building, many a window, many a door,  
And many a division let in and out the vast unknown,  
In infinite orb immovable, within its walls and ceilings.  
The heavens were closed, and spirits mourned their bondage night  
and day,  
And the Divine Vision appeared in Luvah's robes of blood.

Thus was the Mundane shell builded by Urizen's strong power.  
Sorrowing went the planters forth to plant, the sower to sow;  
They dry the channels for the rivers, they poured abroad the seas,  
The seas and lakes. They reared the mountains and the rocks and  
hills

On broad pavilions, on pillar'd roofs and porches and high towers,  
In beauteous order. Thence arose soft clouds and exhalations



Wandering even to the sunny orbs of light and heat,  
For many a window ornamented with sweet ornaments  
Looked out into the world of Tharmas, where in ceaseless torrents  
His billows roll, where monsters wander in the foamy paths.

On clouds the sons of Urizen beheld heaven walled round;  
They weighed and ordered all, and Urizen comforted saw  
The wondrous work flow forth like visible out of the invisible,  
For the Divine Lamb, even Jesus who is the Divine Vision,  
Permitted all, lest Man should fall into Eternal Death. . . .

In awful pomp and gold, in all the precious unhewn stones of Eden  
They build a stupendous Building on the Plain of Salisbury, with  
chains

Of rocks round London Stone; of Reasonings; of unhewn Demonstra-  
tions

In labyrinthine arches (Mighty Urizen the Architect), through which  
The Heavens might revolve and Eternity be bound in their chain.  
Labour unparalll'd! a wondrous rocky World of cruel destiny,  
Rocks piled on rocks reaching the stars; stretching from pole to pole.  
The Building is Natural Religion,<sup>1</sup> and its Altars Natural Morality,  
A building of eternal death, whose proportions are eternal despair.

7

[Blake entitled this part of Vala "The Last Day," by which he seems to mean, not our usual conception of the Last Day, but some great hour of intellectual and social revolution. Urizen now appears as a stern, but on the whole a beneficent power, sowing new moods of thought under the symbolism of human souls. The "Mystery" under which the pseudo-priest and pseudo-philosopher held earth in chains has vanished; and the reign of freedom and imagination begins.]

One planet calls to another and one star inquires of another:  
"What flames are these, coming from the south? What noise, what  
dreadful rout

As of a battle in the heavens? Hark! Heard you not the trumpet  
As of fierce battle?" While they spoke, the flames come on intense  
roaring.

They see him whom they have pierced, they wail because of him.  
And the Fallen Man who was arisen upon the rock of Ages,  
Beheld the visions of God, and he arose up from the rock.

<sup>1</sup> Blake expressly identifies "Natural Religion" with eighteenth century Deism.



Then seized the sons of Urizen the plough. They polished it  
From rust of ages. All its ornaments of gold and silver and ivory  
Re-shone across the field immense where all the nations  
Darkened, like mould, in the divided fallows where the weed  
Triumphs in its own destruction. They took down the harness  
From the blue walls of heaven, starry, jingling, ornamented  
With beautiful art,—the study of Angels, the workmanship of  
Demons,—

When Heaven and Hell in emulation strove in sports of glory.  
The noise of rural works resounded through the heavens of heavens.  
The horse[s] neigh from the battle, the wild bulls from the sultry  
waste,

The tigers from the forests, the lions from the sandy deserts.  
They sing; they seize the instruments of harmony; they throw away  
The spear, the bow, the gun, the mortar; they level the fortifications;  
They beat the iron engines of destruction into wedges;  
They give them to Urthona's sons. Ringing the hammers sound  
In dens of death to forge the spade, the mattock, and the axe,  
The heavy roller to break the clods,—to pass over the nations.

The Sons of Urizen shout; their father rose. The Eternal horses  
Harnessed, they call to Urizen. The heavens move at their call.  
The limbs of Urizen shone with ardour. He laid his hand on the  
plough.

Through dismal darkness drove the plough of ages over cities  
And all their villages; over mountains, and all their valleys;  
Over the graves and caverns of the dead, over the planets,  
And over the void spaces; over sun and moon, and star and constel-  
lation.

Then Urizen commanded and they brought the seed of Men.  
The trembling souls of all the dead stood before Urizen,  
Weak, wailing in the troubled air, East, West, and North and South.  
He turned the horses loose and laid the plough in the northern corner  
Of the wide universal field, then stepped forth into the immense.  
Then he began to sow the seed. He girded round his loins  
With a bright girdle, and his skirt, filled with immortal souls.  
Howling and wailing fly the souls from Urizen's strong hand,  
For from the hand of Urizen the myriads fall like stars  
Into their own appointed places, driven back by the winds.  
The naked warriors rush together down to the seashore.  
They are become like wintry flocks, like forests stripped of leaves;  
The kings and princes of the earth cry with a feeble cry,  
Driven on the unproducing sands, and on the hardened rocks.

And all the while the flames of Orc follow the venturous feet  
Of Urizen, and all the while the trump of Tharmas sounds.  
Weeping and wailing fly the souls from Urizen's strong hands.  
The daughters of Urizen stand with cups and measures of strong wine  
Immense upon the heavens with bread and delicate repasts.  
Then follows the golden harrow in the midst of mental fires,  
To ravishing melody of flutes, and harps, and softest voice.  
The seed is harrowed in while flames heal the black mould and cause  
The human harvest to begin. Toward the south first sprang  
The myriads, and in silent fear they look out of their graves.

Then Urizen sits down to rest, and all his wearied sons  
Take their repose on beds. They drink, they sing, they view the flames  
Of Orc. In joy they view the human harvest springing up.  
A time they give to sweet repose, till all the harvest is ripe.  
And lo! like harvest moon, Ahania cast off her dark clothes—  
She folded them up in care, in silence, and her brightening limbs  
Bathed in the clear spring of the rock; then from her darksome cave  
Issued in majesty divine. Urizen rose up from his couch  
On wings of tenfold joy, clapping his hands, his feet, his radiant wings  
In the immense. As when the sun dances upon the mountains  
A shout of jubilee in lovely notes responds from daughter to daughter,  
From son to son, as if the stars beaming innumerable  
Through night, should sing soft warbling, filling earth and heaven.  
And bright Ahania took her seat by Urizen in songs and joy. . . .

Then Urizen arose and took his sickle in his hand.  
There is a brazen sickle, and a scythe of iron hid  
Deep in the south, guarded by a few solitary stars.  
This sickle Urizen took; the scythe his sons embraced,  
And went forth and began to reap, and all his joyful sons  
Reaped the wide universe, and bound in sheaves a wondrous harvest.  
They took them into the wide barn with loud rejoicings, and triumphs  
Of flute and harp and drum and trumpet, horn and clarion.  
The feast was spread in the bright south; and the Regenerated Man  
Sat at the feast rejoicing, and the wine of Eternity  
Was served round by the flames of Luvah all day and all the night.

And when morning began to dawn upon the distant hills,  
A whirlwind rose up in the center, and in the whirlwind a shriek;  
And in the shriek a rattling of bones, and in the rattling of bones  
A dolorous groan, and from the dolorous groan in tears,  
Rose Enion like a gentle light, and Enion spoke, saying:

"O Dream of Death! the human form dissolving, compassèd  
By beasts and worms and creeping things, and darkness and despair.

The clouds fall off from my wet brow, the dust from my cold limbs,  
Into the sea of Tharmas. Soon renewed, a golden Moth  
I shall cast off my death-clothes and embrace Tharmas again.  
For lo! the winter melted away upon the distant hills,  
And all the black mould sings." She spoke to her infant race; her  
milk

Descends down on the land, the thirsty land drinks and rejoices,  
Wondering to behold the emmet, the grasshopper, the jointed worm.  
The roots shoot thick through the solid rock, bursting their way.  
They cry out in joys of existence, the broad stems  
Rear on the mountains stem after stem. The scaly newt creeps  
From the stone, and the armed fly springs from the rocky crevice,  
The spider, the bat burst from the hardened slime, crying  
To one another: "What are we? And whence is our delight?  
The little moss begins to spring, and the tender weed  
Creeps round our secret nest. Flocks brighten the mountains,  
Herds throng up the valley, wild beasts fill the forests."

Joy thrilled through all the furious forms of Tharmas, humanizing.  
Mild he embraced her whom he sought. He raised her through the  
heavens,

Sounding his trumpet to awake the dead. On high he soared  
Over the ruined worlds, the misty tomb of the Eternal Prophet.

The Eternal Man arose. He welcomed them to the feast.  
The feast was spread in the bright south; and the Eternal Man  
Sat at the feast rejoicing, and the wine of Eternity  
Was served round by the flames of Luvah all day and all the night.  
And many Eternal Men sat at the golden feast to see  
The female form now separate. . . . They remember the days of old.  
And one of the Eternals spoke; all was silent at the feast.

"Man is a worm renewed with joy, he seeks the caves of sleep  
Among the flowers of Beulah in his selfish cold repose,  
Forsaking brotherhood and universal love in selfish clay,  
Folding the pure wings of his mind, seeking the places dark  
Abstracted from the roots of Science, then enclosed anew  
In walls of gold. We cast him like a seed into the earth  
Till times and spaces have passed over him. Duly every morn  
We visit him, covering with a veil the immortal seed.  
With windows from the inclement sky we cover him, and with walls  
And hearths protect the selfish terror, till divided all  
In families we see our shadows born, and thence we know  
That Man subsists by brotherhood and universal love.  
We fall on one another's necks, more closely we embrace,  
Not for ourselves, but for the Eternal Family we live.



Man liveth not by self alone, but in his brother's face  
Each shall behold the Eternal Father, and love and joy abound."

So spoke the Eternal at the Feast. They embraced the new-born Man,  
Calling him Brother, image of the Eternal Father. They sat down  
At the immortal tables, sounding loud their instruments of joy,  
Calling the Morning into Beulah. The Eternal Man rejoiced.  
When Morning dawned the Eternals rose to labour in the vintage.  
Beneath they saw their sons and daughters, wondrous, inconceivable,  
At the dark myriads in shadows in the worlds beneath.

The Morning dawned. Urizen rose, and in his hand the flail  
Sounds on the floor, heard terrible by all beneath the heavens.  
Dismal, loud, redounding, the nether floor shakes with the sound,  
And all the Nations were threshed out, and the stars threshed from  
their husks.

Then Tharmas took the winnowing fan. The winnowing wind furious  
Above, veered round by violent whirlwind driven west and south,  
Tossèd the Nations like chaff into the sea of Tharmas.

"O Mystery!" fierce Tharmas cried, "Behold thy end is come!  
Art thou she that made the Nations drunk with the cup of Religion?  
Go down, ye kings and counsellors and giant warriors,  
Go down into the depths; go down and hide yourselves beneath.  
Go down with horse and chariots and trumpets of hoarse war.  
Lo! how the pomp of Mystery goes down into the caves.  
Her great men howl and throw the dust, and rend their hoary hair.  
Her delicate women and children shriek upon the bitter wind,  
Spoiled of their beauty, their hair rent, their skin shrivelled up.  
Lo! darkness covers the long pomp of banners on the wind,  
And black horses, and armed men, and miserable bound captives.  
Where shall the graves receive them all, and where shall be their  
place?  
And who shall mourn for Mystery, who never loosed her captives?"

## VIII

### FROM THE STORY OF LOS AND ENITHARMON

Los is the god of time and also represents that spirit of prophecy and inspiration which at once according to the Kantian conception arranges visions in order of time and yet transcends all time. His wife Enitharmon represents space and also perhaps that imaginative clairvoyance which



transcends all space. Los is identified in a vague, two-in-one way with Urthona, the spirit of energy and the last of the four Zoas or mental kings. In his character as Los he is the noblest and mightiest being of Blake's myth. He falls into error occasionally, but is usually represented as forging on his anvils all that is noblest and most imaginative in man's mental life. Los is often also identified with Blake himself, and it is probable, though less certain, that Enitharmon at times stands for either a real or an idealized woman.

I

[*Los Falls into the Abyss of Error and False Prophecy.*]

The Immortal stood frozen amidst  
The vast rock of eternity, times  
And times, a night of vast durance,  
Impatient, stifled, stiffen'd, hard'n'd;

Till impatience no longer could bear  
The hard bondage; rent, rent the vast solid  
With a crash from immense to immense;

Crack'd across into numberless fragments,  
The Prophetic wrath struggling for vent,  
Hurls apart, stamping furious to dust,  
And crumbling with bursting sobs, heaves  
The black marble on high into fragments.

Hurl'd apart on all sides as a falling  
Rock, the innumerable fragments away  
Fell asunder, and horrible vacuum  
Beneath him and on all sides round.

Falling, falling, Los fell and fell,  
Sunk precipitant, heavy down, down,  
Times on times, night on night, day on day—  
Truth has bounds, Error none—falling, falling,  
Years on years, and ages on ages;  
Still he fell thro' the void, still a void,  
Found for falling day and night without end;  
For tho' day or night was not, their spaces  
Were measured by his incessant whirls  
In the horrid vacuity bottomless.

[*This extract and the three following deal with the loves and jealousies of Los and Enitharmon.*]

But Los and Enitharmon delighted in the moony spaces of Eno,<sup>1</sup>  
 Nine times they lived among the forests, feeding on sweet fruits,  
 And nine bright spaces wandered, weaving mazes of delight,  
 Snaring the wild goats for their milk. "We eat the flesh of Lambs,  
 A male and female, naked and ruddy as the pride of summer."

Alternate love and hate his breast, hers scorn and jealousy,  
 In embryo passions [move], they kissed not nor embraced for shame  
 and fear.

His head beamed bright and in his vigorous voice was prophecy.  
 He could control the times and seasons and the days and years;  
 She could control the spaces, regions, desert, flood and forest,  
 But had no power to weave the veil of covering for her sins.  
 They wandered long, till they sat down upon the margined sea,  
 Conversing in the visions of Beulah in dark slumbrous bliss.  
 Nine years they viewed the living spheres, feeding the visions of  
 Beulah.

But the two youthful wonders wandered in the world of Tharmas.  
 "Thy name is Enitharmon," said the fierce prophetic boy.  
 "While thy mild voice fills all these caverns with sweet harmony,  
 O how our parents sit and mourn in their silent secret bowers!"  
 But Enitharmon answered with a dropping tear and frowning  
 Dark as a dewy morning when the crimson light appears,—  
 "We hear the warlike clarions, we view the burning spears,  
 Yet thou in idolence reposest, holding me in bonds.  
 To make us happy let them weary their immortal powers,  
 While we draw in their sweet delights, while we return them scorn  
 On scorn to feed our discontent, for if we grateful prove  
 They will withhold sweet love, whose food is scorn and bitter roots."

## 3

And Los and Enitharmon sat in discontent and scorn.  
 The Nuptial song arose from all the thousand thousand spirits  
 Over the joyful earth and sea and ascended into the heaven,  
 For elemental gods their thunderous organs blew creating  
 Delicious viands. Demons of waves their watery echoes woke.  
 Bright souls of vegetative life budding and blossoming  
 Stretch their immortal hands to smite the gold and silver strings,

<sup>1</sup> Eno = the earth, "the aged mother."

With doubling voices, and loud horns, wound round and round,  
    resounding.  
Cavernous dwellers filled the enormous revelry, responding,  
And spirits of flaming fire on high governed the mighty song.

4

For Los and Enitharmon walked forth on the dewy earth,  
Contracting or expanding all their flexible senses  
At will to murmur in the flowers small as the honey-bee,  
At will to stretch across the heavens and step from star to star,  
Or standing on the earth erect, or on the stormy seas,  
Driving the storms before them or delighting in sunny beams,  
While round their heads the elemental gods kept harmony.

And Los said: "Lo, the lily pale and the rose reddening fierce  
Reproach thee, and the beamy garden sickens at thy beauty;  
I grasp thy vest in my strong hands in vain, like water springs  
In the bright sands of Los evading my embrace. Thus I alone  
Wander among the virgins of the summer. 'Look,' they cry,  
'The poor forsaken Los mocked by the worm, the shelly snail,  
The emmet and the beetle'; hark! they laugh and mock at Los."

Enitharmon answered: "If the god enraptured me enfold  
In clouds of sweet obscurity, my beauteous form dissolving,  
Howl thou over the body of death. 'Tis thine. But if among the  
    visions

Of summer I have seen thee sleep and turn thy cheek delighted  
Upon the rose or lily pale, or on a bank where sleep  
The beamy daughters of the light, starting, they rise, they flee  
From thy fierce love, for though I am dissolved in the bright god,  
My spirit still pursues thy false love over rocks and valleys."

Los answered: "Therefore fade I thus dissolved in raptured trance,  
Thou canst repose on clouds of secrecy, while o'er my limbs  
Cold dews and hoary frost creep, though I lie on banks of summer  
Among the branches of the world. Cold and repining Los  
Still dies for Enitharmon, nor a spirit springs from my dead corse,  
Then I am dead till thou revivest me with thy sweet song.  
I know thee not as once I knew thee in those blessed fields  
Where memory wishes to repose among the flocks of Tharmas."

So saying in deep sobs he languished till dead he also fell.  
Night passed, and Enitharmon ere the dawn returned in bliss.  
She sang over Los, reviving him to life; his groans were terrible.  
And thus she sang:—

    "I seize the sphery harp, strike the strings!



At the first sound the golden Sun arises from the deep,  
And shakes his awful hair;  
The echo wakes the moon to unbind her silver locks;  
The golden Sun bears on my song,  
And nine bright spheres of harmony rise round the fiery king.

The joy of woman is the death of her most best beloved,  
Who dies for love of her  
In torments of fierce jealousy and pangs of adoration.  
The lovers' night bears on my song,  
And the nine spheres rejoice beneath my powerful control.

They sing unceasing to the notes of my immortal hand.  
The solemn, silent moon  
Reverberates the living harmony upon my limbs;  
The birds and beasts rejoice and play,  
And every one seeks for his mate to prove his inmost joy.

Furious and terrible they sport and rend the nether deep;  
The Deep lifts up his rugged head,  
And lost in infinite humming wings vanishes with a cry.  
The fading cry is ever dying,  
The living voice is ever living in its inmost joy.

Arise, you little glancing wings and sing your infant joy,  
Arise and drink your bliss,  
For everything that lives is holy, for the source of life  
Descends to be a weeping babe;  
For the earthworm renews the moisture of the sandy plain.

Now my left hand I stretch to Earth beneath,  
And strike the terrible string.  
I wake sweet joy in dens of sorrow and I plant a smile  
In forests of affliction,  
And wake the bubbling springs of life in regions of dark death.

O, I am weary! Lay thy hand upon me or I faint.  
I faint beneath these beams of thine,  
For thou hast touchèd my five senses, and they answered thee.  
Now I am nothing, and I sink,  
And on the bed of silence sleep till thou awakest me."

Thus sang the lonely one in rapturous, delusive trance.  
Los heard, reviving. He seized her in his arms; delusive hope  
Kindling, she led him into shadows, and thence fled outstretched  
Upon the immense like a bright rainbow, weeping, smiling, fading.



Then Los mourned on the dismal wind in his jealous lamentation.

“Why cannot I enjoy thy beauty, lovely Enitharmon?  
 When I return from clouds of grief in the wandering elements,  
 When thou in thrilling joy, in beaming summer loveliness,  
 Delectable reposest, ruddy in my absence, flaming with beauty,  
 Cold, pale in sorrow at my approach, trembling at my terrific  
 Forehead and eyes, thy lips decay like roses in the spring.  
 How art thou shrunk! Thy grapes that burst in summer’s vast excess,  
 Shut up in little purple covering, faintly bud and die.  
 Thy olive-trees that poured down oil upon a thousand hills  
 Sickly look forth and scarcely stretch their branches to the plain.  
 Thy roses that expanded in the face of glowing morn  
 Hid in a little silken veil scarce breathe and faintly shine;  
 Thy lilies that gave light what time the morning lookèd forth  
 Hid in the vales, faintly lament, and no one hears their voice.  
 All things beside the woeful Los enjoy delights of beauty!

Once how I sang and called the beasts and birds to their delight,  
 Nor knew that I alone, exempted from the joys of love,  
 Must war with secret monsters of the animating worlds.  
 O, that I had not seen the day! Then should I be at rest!  
 Nor felt the strivings of desire, nor longings after life,  
 For life is sweet to Los the wretched. To his wingèd woes  
 Is given a craving cry; that they may sit at night on barren rocks,  
 And whet their beaks and snuff the air, and watch the opening dawn,  
 And shriek till at the smell of blood they stretch their bony wings,  
 And cut the winds like arrows shot by troops of destiny.”

Thus Los lamented in the night, unheard by Enitharmon.

[*The birth of Orc, the spirit of human passion.*]

[*The “he” in the opening lines refers to Los.*]

Infected, mad, he danced on his mountains high and dark as heaven,  
 Now fixed into one steadfast bulk his features stonify.  
 From his mouth curses, and from his eyes issuing sparks of blighting,  
 Beside the anvil cold he danced with the hammer of Urthona.  
 Terrific, pale, Enitharmon stretched on the dreary earth,  
 Felt her immortal limbs freeze, stiffening, pale, inflexible.  
 His feet shrunk withering, from the deeps shrinking and withering;  
 And Enitharmon shrunk up, all their fibres withering

As plants withered by winter, leaves and stems, and roots decaying,  
Melt into thin air, while the seed, driven by the furious wind,  
Rests on the distant mountain tops, so Los and Enitharmon  
Shrunk into fixèd space stood trembling on a rocky cliff.  
As far as highest Zenith from lowest Nadir so far they shrunk,  
Los from the furnaces a space immense, and left the cold  
Prince of Light bound in chains of intellect among the furnaces.  
But all the furnaces were out and the bellows had ceased to blow.  
He stood trembling, and Enitharmon clung around his knees,  
Their senses unexpansive in one steadfast bulk remained.  
The night blew cold, and Enitharmon shrieked on the dismal wind.  
Her pale hands cling around her husband, and over her weak head  
Shadows of Eternal Death sit in the leaden air.

But the soft pipe, the flute and viol, organ, harp, and cymbal,  
And the sweet sound of silver voices calm the weary couch  
Of Enitharmon, but her groans drown the immortal harps.  
Loud and more loud the living music floats upon the air;  
Faint and more faint the daylight waxes; the wheels of turning dark-  
ness  
Began in solemn revolutions. Earth convulsed with rending pangs  
Rocked to and fro and crièd sore at the groans of Enitharmon.

Still the faint harps and silver voices calm the weary couch;  
But from the caves of deepest night, ascending in clouds of mist,  
The winter spreads his wide black wings across from pole to pole;  
Grim frost beneath, and terrible snow linked in a marriage chain  
Began a dismal dance. The winds around on pointed rocks  
Settled like bats innumerable, ready to fly abroad.  
The groans of Enitharmon shake the skies, the labouring earth,  
Till from her heart, rending his way, a terrible child sprang forth  
In thunder, smoke, and sullen flames, and howlings, of fury and  
blood.

Soon as his burning eyes were opened, looking on the abyss,  
The horrible trumpets of the deep bellowed with bitter blasts,  
The enormous demons woke and howled around the new-born king.

7

*[The parents of Orc, in fear of his might, have bound him, and now  
make a vain attempt to release him.]*

His limbs bound down mock at his chains, for over them a flame  
Of circling fire unceasing play to feed them with life, and bring  
The virtues of the Eternal Worlds. Ten thousand thousand spirits

Of life lament around the Demon, going forth and returning.  
At his enormous call they flee into the heavens of heavens,  
And back return with wine and food, or dive into the deeps  
To bring the thrilling joys of sense to quell his ceaseless rage.  
His eyes, the lights of his large soul, contract, or else expand.  
Contracted they behold the secrets of the infinite mountains,  
The veins of gold and silver, and the hidden things of Vala,  
Whatever grows from its pure bud, or wreathes a fragrant soul.  
Expanded they behold the terrors of the Sun and Moon,  
The elemental planets, and the orbs of eccentric fire.  
His nostrils breathe a fiery flame, his locks are like the forests  
Of wild beasts; there the lion glares, the tiger and wolf howl there,  
And there the eagle hides her young in cliffs and precipices.  
His bosom is like the starry heavens expanded. All the stars  
Sing round. There waves the harvest; and the vintage rejoices. The  
springs  
Flow into rivers of delight. There the spontaneous flowers  
Drink, laugh, and sing; the grasshopper, the emmet and the fly,  
The golden moth builds there a house and spreads her silken bed.  
His loins inwove with silken fires are like a furnace fierce,  
As the strong bull in summer time when bees sing round the heath,  
When the herds low after the shadow and after the water-spring.  
The numerous flocks cover the mountains and shine along the valley;  
His knees are rocks of adamant, ruby, and emerald;  
Spirits of strength in palaces rejoice in golden armour,  
Armed with the spear and shield they drink and rejoice over the slain.  
Such is the Demon, such his terror on the nether deep.

And Los repented that he had chained Orc upon the mountain.  
And Enitharmon's tears prevailed. Parental love returned.  
Though terrible his dread of that infernal chain, they rose  
At midnight hasting to their much beloved care.  
Los taking Enitharmon by the hand led her along  
The dismal vales and up to the iron mountain tops where Orc  
Howled in the furious wind. He thought to give to Enitharmon  
Her son in tenfold joy, and to compensate for her tears  
Even if his own death resulted, so much pity him pained.

But when they came to the dark rock and to the spectrous cave,  
Lo, the young limbs had stricken root into the rock, and strong  
Fibres had from the chain of jealousy inwove themselves  
In a swift vegetation round the rock and round the cave,  
And over the immortal limbs of the terrible fiery boy.



In vain they strove now to unchain, in vain with bitter tears  
 To melt the chain of jealousy. Not Enitharmon's death,  
 Nor the consummating of Los, could ever melt the chain,  
 Nor could unroot the infernal fibres from their rocky bed.  
 Nor all Urthona's strength, nor all the power of Luvah's bulls,  
 Though they each morning drag the unwilling sun out of the deep,  
 Could now uproot the infernal chain, for it had taken root  
 Into the iron rock, and grew a chain beneath the earth,  
 Even to the centre, wrapping round the centre and the limbs  
 Of Orc, entering with fibres become one with him, a living chain  
 Sustained by the Demon's life. Despair, and terror, and woe and rage  
 Enwrap the parents in cold clouds as they bend howling o'er  
 The terrible boy, till fainting by his side, the parents fell.

8

*[Los at his anvils in the City of Law.]*

Thundering the Hammers beat, and the Bellows blow loud,  
 Living, self-moving, mourning, lamenting, and howling incessantly.  
 Bowlahoola<sup>1</sup> thro' all its porches feels, tho' too fast founded,  
 Its pillars and porticoes to tremble at the force  
 Of mortal or immortal arm, and softly lilling flutes,  
 Accordant with the horrid labours, make sweet melody.  
 Thousands and thousands labour, thousands play on instruments,  
 Stringed or fluted, to ameliorate the sorrows of slavery.  
 Loud sport the dancers in the dance of death, rejoicing in carnage.  
 The hard, dentant Hammers are lulled by the flutes' lula lula,  
 The bellowing Furnaces' blare by the long sounding clarion,  
 The double drum drowns howls and groans, the shrill fife shrieks and  
     cries,  
 The crooked horn mellows the hoarse, raving serpent, terrible, but  
     harmonious.

Los is by mortals nam'd Time, Enitharmon is nam'd Space; .  
 But they depict him bald and aged who is in eternal youth,  
 All powerful, and his locks flourish like the brows of morning;  
 He is the Spirit of Prophecy, the ever apparent Elias;  
 Time is the mercy of Eternity; without Time's swiftness,  
 Which is the swiftest of all things, all were eternal torment.  
 All the Gods of the Kingdoms of Earth labour in Los's Halls.  
 Every one is a fallen Son of the Spirit of Prophecy.  
 He is the Fourth Zoa, that stood around the Throne Divine.

<sup>1</sup> The City of Law.



[*Los forces his Spectre, or baser nature, to help him in his great purpose.*]

"I must Create a System, or be enslav'd by another Man's;  
I will not Reason and Compare; my business is to Create."

So Los, in fury and strength, in indignation and burning wrath;  
Shudd'ring the Spectre howls, his howlings terrify the night.  
He stamps around the Anvil, beating blows of stern despair;  
He curses Heaven and Earth, Day and Night, and Sun and Moon!  
He curses Forest, Spring, and River, Desert and sandy Waste,  
Cities and Nations, Families and Peoples, Tongues and Laws,  
Driven to desperation by Los's terrors and threat'ning fears.

## 10

Thou seest the Constellations in the deep and wondrous Night,  
They rise in order and continue their immortal courses  
Upon the mountains and in vales, with harp and heavenly song,  
With flute and clarion, with cups and measures fill'd with foaming  
wine.

Glitt'ring the streams reflect the Vision of beatitude,  
And the calm Ocean joys beneath, and smooths his awful waves.

These are the Sons of Los, and these the Labourers of the Vintage.  
Thou seest the gorgeous clothèd Flies that dance and sport in summer  
Upon the sunny brooks and meadows; every one the dance  
Knows in its intricate mazes of delight, artful to weave,  
Each one to sound his instruments of music in the dance,  
To touch each other and recede; to cross and change and return.  
These are the Children of Los. Thou seest the Trees on mountains;  
The wind blows heavy, loud they thunder thro' the darksome sky,  
Uttering prophecies and speaking instructive words to the sons  
Of men. These are the Sons of Los, these the Visions of Eternity.  
But we see only as it were the hem of their garments.

But others of the Sons of Los build Moments and Minutes and Hours,  
And Days and Months and Years, and Ages and Periods, wondrous  
buildings.

And every Moment has a Couch of gold for soft repose—  
A Moment equals a pulsation of the artery—  
And between every two Moments stands a Daughter of Beulah,  
To feed the Sleepers on their Couches with maternal care.  
And every Minute has an azure Tent with silken Veils;  
And every Hour has a bright golden Gate carvèd with skill;

And every Day and Night has Walls of brass and Gates of adamant,  
Shining like precious stones, and ornamented with appropriate signs;  
And every Month a silver paved Terrace, builded high;  
And every Year, invulnerable Barriers, with high Towers;  
And every Age is Moated deep with Bridges of silver and gold;  
And every Seven Ages is encircled with a Flaming Fire.  
All are the work of Fairy hands of the Four Elements.  
The Guard are Angels of Providence on duty evermore.  
Every Time less than a pulsation of the artery  
Is equal in its period and value to Six Thousand Years.

For in this Period the Poet's Work is Done; and all the Great  
Events of Time start forth, and are conceiv'd in such a Period  
Within a Moment, a Pulsation of the Artery.  
The Sky is an immortal Tent built by the Sons of Los,  
And every Space that a Man views around his dwelling-place,  
Standing on his own roof or in his garden on a mount  
Of twenty-five cubits in height, such space is his Universe;  
And on its verge the Sun rises and sets, the Clouds bow  
To meet the flat Earth and the Sea in such an order'd Space;  
The Starry heavens reach no further, but here bend and set  
On all sides, and the two poles turn on their valves of gold;  
And if he move his dwelling-place, his heavens also move.

II

*[The weaving of the daughters of Los may represent the despised poet and prophet weaving their imaginative dreams. Or it may symbolize the imagination creating in our brain the supposedly material universe.]*

And one Daughter of Los sat at the fiery Reel, and another  
Sat at the shining Loom with her Sisters attending round.  
Terrible their distress, and their sorrow cannot be utter'd;  
And another Daughter of Los sat at the Spinning Wheel  
Endless their labour, with bitter food, void of sleep,  
Tho' hungry, they labour; they rouse themselves, anxious,  
Hour after hour labouring at the whirling Wheel;  
Many Wheels and as many lovely Daughters sit weeping.

Yet the intoxicating delight that they take in their work  
Obliterates every other evil; none pities their tears,  
Yet they regard not pity, and they expect no one to pity,  
For they labour for life and love, regardless of any one  
But for the poor Spectres that they work for always incessantly.

They are mock'd by every one that passes by, they regard not;  
They labour, and when their Wheels are broken by scorn and malice,  
They mend them, sorrowing with many tears and afflictions.

Other Daughters of Los, labouring at looms less fine,  
Create the Silkworm and the Spider and the Catterpillar  
To assist in their most grievous work of pity and compassion.  
And others create the woolly Lamb and the downy Fowl  
To assist in the work; the Lamb bleats; the Sea-fowl cries.  
Men understand not the distress and the labour and sorrow  
That in the Interior Worlds is carried on in fear and trembling,  
Weaving the shudd'ring fears and loves of Albion's Families.  
Thunderous rage the Spindles of iron, and the iron Distaff  
Maddens in the fury of their hands, weaving in bitter tears  
The Veil of Goat's-hair and Purple and Scarlet and fine twined Linen.

12

Here on the banks of the Thames Los builded Golgonooza,<sup>1</sup>  
Outside of the Gates of the Human Heart, beneath Beulah,  
In the midst of the rocks of the Altars of Albion. In fears  
He builded it, in rage and in fury. It is the Spiritual Fourfold  
London, continually building and continually decaying, desolate  
In eternal labours; loud the Furnaces and loud the Anvils  
Of Death thunder incessant around the flaming Couches.  
Fourfold the Sons of Los in their divisions; and fourfold  
The great City of Golgonooza; fourfold toward the north,  
And toward the south fourfold, and fourfold toward the east and west,  
Each within other toward the four points; that toward  
Eden, and that toward the World of Generation,  
And that toward Beulah, and that toward Ulro.<sup>2</sup>  
Ulro is the space of the terrible starry wheels of Albion's sons;  
But that toward Eden is walled up till time of renovation;  
Yet it is perfect in its building, ornaments, and perfection.

And the Four Points are thus beheld in Great Eternity:  
West, the Circumference; South, the Zenith; North,  
The Nadir; East, the Center, unapproachable for ever.  
These are the four Faces towards the Four Worlds of Humanity  
In every man. Ezekiel saw them by Chebar's flood.

And the North Gate of Golgonooza toward Generation  
Has four sculptur'd Bulls terrible before the Gate of iron,

<sup>1</sup> Golgonooza is also defined by Blake as the City of Art and Manufacture.

<sup>2</sup> Ulro = realm or state of error.



And iron the Bulls; and that which looks toward Ulro,  
Clay bak'd and enamel'd, eternal glowing as four furnaces,  
Turning upon the Wheels<sup>1</sup> of Albion's sons with enormous power;  
And that toward Beulah four—gold, silver, brass, and iron;  
And that toward Eden four, form'd of gold, silver, brass, and iron.

The South, a golden Gate, has four Lions terrible, living;  
That toward Generation four, of iron carv'd wondrous;  
That toward Ulro four, clay bak'd, laborious workmanship:  
That toward Eden four, immortal gold, silver, brass, and iron.

The Western Gate, fourfold, is clos'd; having four Cherubim  
Its guards, living, the work of elemental hands—laborious task—  
Like men, hermaphroditic, each winged with eight wings:  
That toward Generation, iron; that toward Beulah, stone;  
That toward Ulro, clay; that toward Eden, metals;  
But all clos'd up till the last day, when the graves shall yield their  
dead.

The Eastern Gate, fourfold; terrible and deadly its ornaments  
Taking their forms from the Wheels of Albion's sons, as cogs  
Are form'd in a wheel, to fit the cogs of the adverse wheel.

That toward Eden, eternal ice, frozen in seven folds  
Of forms of death; and that toward Beulah, stone;  
The seven diseases of the earth are carved terrible.  
And that toward Ulro, forms of war, seven enormities:  
And that toward Generation, seven generative forms.

And every part of the City is fourfold; and every inhabitant fourfold;  
And every pot and vessel and garment and utensil of the houses;  
And every house, fourfold; but the third Gate in every one  
Is clos'd as with a threefold curtain of ivory and fine linen and ermine.

Around Golgonooza lies the land of death eternal; a Land  
Of pain and misery and despair and ever-brooding melancholy.

There is the Cave, the Rock, the Tree, the Lake of Udan-Adan,<sup>2</sup>  
The Forest and the Marsh, and the Pits of bitumen deadly;  
The Rocks of solid fire, the Ice valleys, the Plains  
Of burning sand, the rivers, cataract, and Lakes of Fire;  
The Islands of the fiery Lakes, the Trees of Malice, Revenge,  
And black Anxiety, and the Cities of the Salamandrine men.  
The land of darkness flamed, but no light, and no repose;

<sup>1</sup> Starry wheels symbolizing probably various types of dogmatism and error.

<sup>2</sup> Udan-Adan probably = the Lake of Oblivion. Cf. *The Passions*.



The land of snows, of trembling, and of iron hail incessant;  
The land of earthquakes; and the land of woven labyrinths;  
The land of snares and traps and wheels, and pitfalls and dire mills;  
The Voids, the Solids, and the land of clouds and regions of waters.

13

[*A vision of Los in anger.*]

Like the black storm coming out of Chaos, beyond the stars,  
It issues thro' the dark and intricate caves of the Mundane Shell,  
Passing the planetary visions and the well adorned Firmament.  
The Sun rolls into Chaos and the Stars into the Deserts,  
And then the storms become visible, audible, and terrible,  
Covering the light of day; and rolling down upon the mountains,  
Deluge all the country round. Such is a vision of Los  
When Rintrah and Palamabron spake, and such his stormy face  
Appear'd, as does the face of heaven when cover'd with thick storms,  
Pitying and loving, tho' in frowns of terrible perturbation.

But Los dispers'd the clouds, even as the strong winds of Jehovah.  
And Los thus spoke: "O noble Sons, be patient yet a little;  
I have embraced the falling Death, he is become one with me.  
O Sons, we live not by wrath, by mercy alone we live."

14

Just at the place to where the Lark mounts is a Crystal Gate.  
It is the entrance of the First Heaven, named Luther; for  
The Lark is Los's Messenger thro' the Twenty-seven Churches,  
That the Seven Eyes of God, who walk even to Satan's Seat,  
Thro' all the Twenty-seven Heavens may not slumber nor sleep.

When on the highest lift of his light pinions he arrives  
At that bright Gate, another Lark meets him, and back to back  
They touch their pinions' tip tip, and each descend  
To their respective Earths, and there all night consult with Angels  
Of Providence and with the Eyes of God all night in slumbers  
Inspired; and at the dawn of day send out another Lark  
Into another Heaven to carry news upon his wings.  
Thus are the Messengers dispatched till they reach the Earth again  
In the East Gate of Golgonooza, and the Twenty-eighth bright  
Lark met the Female Ololon descending into my Garden.  
Thus it appears to Mortal eyes and those of the Ulro<sup>1</sup> Heavens,  
But not thus to Immortals; the Lark is a mighty Angel.

<sup>1</sup> Ulro = state of error.

There is in Eden a sweet River of milk and liquid pearl  
 Nam'd Ololon, on whose mild banks dwelt those who Milton drove  
 Down into Ulro; and they wept in long resounding song  
 For seven days of eternity; and the river's living banks,  
 The mountains wailed, and every plant that grew in solemn sighs  
 lamented.

When Luvah's bulls each morning drag the sulphur Sun out of the  
 Deep,  
 Harnessed with starry harness black and shining, kept by black slaves  
 That work all night at the starry harness—strong and vigorous,  
 They drag the unwilling Orb—at this time all the Family  
 Of Eden heard the lamentation, and Providence began;  
 But when the clarions of day sounded, they drown'd the lamentations;  
 And when night came all was silent in Ololon, and all refus'd to  
 lament  
 In the still night, fearing lest they should others molest.

Seven mornings Los heard them, as the poor bird within the shell  
 Hears its impatient parent bird; and Enitharmon heard them  
 But saw them not, for the blue Mundane Shell enclos'd them in.

[*Los brings divine inspiration to Blake.*]

While Los heard indistinct in fear, what time I bound my sandals  
 On to walk forward thro' Eternity, Los descended to me;  
 And Los behind me stood, a terrible flaming Sun, just close  
 Behind my back. I turned round in terror, and behold,  
 Los stood in that fierce-glowing fire; and he also stoop'd down  
 And bound my sandals on in Udan Adan.<sup>1</sup> Trembling I stood  
 Exceedingly with fear and terror, standing in the Vale  
 Of Lambeth; but he kissed me and wished me health,  
 And I became One Man with him, arising in my strength.  
 'Twas too late now to recede, Los had enter'd into my soul;  
 His terrors now possess'd me whole! I arose in fury and strength.

"I am that Shadowy Prophet who, Six Thousand Years ago,  
 Fell from my station in the Eternal bosom. Six Thousand Years  
 Are finish'd. I return! both Time and Space obey my will.  
 I in Six Thousand Years walk up and down, for not one Moment  
 Of Time is lost, nor one Event of Space unpermanent;  
 But all remain; every fabric of Six Thousand Years

<sup>1</sup> Udan Adan probably = state of mental confusion. Cf. passage 12.

Remains permanent; tho' on the Earth, where Satan  
 Fell and was cut off, all things vanish and are seen no more,  
 They vanish, not from me and mine; we guard them first and last.  
 The generations of men run on in the tide of Time,  
 But leave their destin'd lineaments permanent for ever and ever."

So spake Los as we went along to his supreme abode.

## IX

### FROM THE STORY OF ALBION AND JERUSALEM

Albion in *Jerusalem* takes the place of a character called The Eternal Man, in the earlier poem of *Vala*. Apparently Blake originally meant this character to be a personification of abstract humanity, and later decided to make him a personification of the English race, which in turn represents humanity as a whole. Jerusalem is a female spirit symbolizing liberty, liberty in poetry, in social relations, in religion, and in all imaginative life. She is also the mutual forgiveness, without which mutual liberty is impossible. The story of Albion and Jerusalem symbolizes the long search of a people, through many errors and lapses, for "the truth that shall make you free."

#### I

And Los prayed and said: "O Divine Saviour, arise  
 Upon the Mountains of Albion as in ancient time. Behold!  
 The Cities of Albion seek thy face, London groans in pain  
 From Hill to Hill, and the Thames laments along the Valleys.  
 The little Villages of Middlesex and Surrey hunger and thirst,  
 The Twenty-eight Cities of Albion stretch their hands to thee  
 Because of the Oppressors of Albion in every City and Village.  
 They mock at the Labourer's limbs, they mock at his starv'd Children;  
 They buy his Daughters that they may have power to sell his sons;  
 They compel the Poor to live upon a crust of bread; by soft, mild arts  
 They reduce the Man to want, then give with pomp and ceremony.  
 The praise of Jehovah is chaunted from lips of hunger and thirst."

#### 2

[*Los speaks again.*]

"I saw the limbs form'd for exercise, contemn'd, and the beauty of  
 Eternity look'd upon as deformity, and loveliness as a dry tree.  
 I saw disease forming a Body of Death around the Lamb



Of God to destroy Jerusalem, and to devour the body of Albion,  
 By war and stratagem to win the labour of the husbandman;  
 Awkwardness arm'd in steel, folly in a helmet of gold,  
 Weakness with horns and talons, ignorance with a rav'ning beak—  
 Inspiration deny'd, Genius forbidden by laws of punishment;  
 I saw, terrified. I took the sighs and tears and bitter groans,  
 I lifted them into my Furnaces to form the spiritual sword  
 That lays open the hidden heart; I drew forth the pang  
 Of sorrow red hot, I work'd it on my resolute anvil.  
 Loud roar my Furnaces and loud my hammer is heard.  
 I labour day and night. I behold the soft affections  
 Condense beneath my hammer into forms of cruelty;  
 But still I labour in hope, tho' still my tears flow down,  
 That he who will not defend Truth may be compell'd to defend  
 A Lie; that he may be snared and caught and snared and taken,  
 That Enthusiasm and Life may not cease; arise, Spectre, arise!"

3

So Los spoke. But when he saw blue death in Albion's feet,  
 Again he join'd the Divine Body, following, merciful,  
 While Albion fled more indignant, revengeful, covering  
 His face and bosom with petrific hardness, and his hands  
 And feet, lest any should enter his bosom and embrace  
 His hidden heart; his Emanation wept and trembled within him,  
 Uttering not his jealousy, but hiding it as with  
 Iron and steel, dark and opaque, with clouds and tempests brooding;  
 His strong limbs shudder'd upon his mountains high and dark.

Turning from Universal Love petrific as he went,  
 His cold against the warmth of Eden rag'd with loud  
 Thunders of deadly war (the fever of the human soul),  
 Fires, and clouds of rolling smoke; but mild the Saviour follow'd him,  
 Displaying the Eternal Vision, the Divine Similitude,  
 In loves and tears of brothers, sisters, sons, fathers, and friends,  
 Which if Man ceases to behold, he ceases to exist,

Saying: "Albion! Our wars are wars of life, and wounds of love,  
 With intellectual spears, and long wingèd arrows of thought.  
 Mutual in one another's love and wrath all renewing  
 We live as One Man; for contracting our infinite senses  
 We behold multitude; or, expanding, we behold as one,  
 As One Man all the Universal Family; and that One Man  
 We call Jesus the Christ. And He in us, and we in Him,  
 Live in perfect harmony in Eden, the land of life,



Giving, receiving, and forgiving each others' trespasses.  
He is the Good Shepherd, He is the Lord and Master;  
He is the Shepherd of Albion, He is all in all  
In Eden, in the garden of God, and in heavenly Jerusalem.  
If we have offended, forgive us, take not vengeance against us."

Thus speaking, the Divine Family follow Albion.  
I see them in the Vision of God upon my pleasant valleys.

I behold London, a Human awful wonder of God!  
He says: "Return, Albion, return! I give myself for thee.  
My Streets are my Ideas of Imagination.  
Awake, Albion, awake! and let us awake up together.  
My Houses are Thoughts; my Inhabitants, Affections."

4

[*The giant Albion in his desolation.*]

(a)

The Eternal Man sleeps in the earth, nor feels the glorious sun  
Nor silent moon, nor all the hosts of heaven move in his body.  
His fiery halls are dark, and round his limbs the serpent Orc  
Fold without fold encompasses him, and his corrupting members  
Vomit out the scaly monsters of the restless deep.  
They come up in the rivers and among the nether parts  
Of Man who lays upon the shore, leaning his faded head  
Upon the oozy rock enwrapped with the weeds of death.  
His eyes sink hollow in his head, his flesh covered with slime  
And shrunk up to the bones. Alas! that Man should come to this!  
His strong bones beat with snows and hid within the caves of night,  
Marrowless, bloodless, falling into dust, driven by the winds.  
O! how the horrors of Eternal Death take hold on Man.  
His faint groans shake the caves and issue through the desolate rocks,  
And the strong eagle now with numbing cold, blighted of feathers,  
Once like the pride of the sun,—now flagging on cold night,  
Hovers with blasted wings aloft, watching with eagle eye  
Till Man shall leave a corruptible body. He, famished, hears him  
groan,  
And now he fixes his strong talons in the pointed rock,  
And now he beats the heavy air with his enormous wings.  
Beside him lies the lion dead, and in his belly worms  
Feast on his death till universal death devours all,  
And the pale horse seeks for the pool to lie him down and die,  
But finds the pool filled with serpents devouring one another.  
He droops his head and trembling stands, and his bright eyes decay.

His Children exil'd from his breast pass to and fro before him;  
 His birds are silent on his hills, flocks die beneath his branches;  
 His Tents are fall'n; his trumpets, and the sweet sound of his harp  
 Are silent on his clouded hills, that belch forth storms and fire;  
 His milk of Cows and honey of Bees, and fruit of golden harvest  
 Is gather'd in the scorching heat and in the driving rain.  
 Where once he sat he weary walks in misery and pain,  
 His Giant beauty and perfection fallen into dust,  
 Till from within his wither'd breast grown narrow with his woes,  
 The corn is turn'd to thistles and the apples into poison,  
 The birds of song to murderous crows, his joys to bitter groans,  
 The voices of children in his tents to cries of helpless infants,  
 And self-exiled from the face of light and shine of morning  
 In the dark world, a narrow house, he wanders up and down,  
 Seeking for rest and finding none; and hidden far within,  
 His Eon weeping in the cold and desolated Earth.

## 5

[*Albion laments that he has forsaken Jerusalem.*]

"O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! I have forsaken thy Courts,  
 Thy Pillars of ivory and gold; thy Curtains of silk and fine  
 Linen; thy Pavements of precious stones; thy Walls of pearl  
 And gold; thy Gates of Thanksgiving; thy Windows of Praise;  
 Thy Clouds of Blessing; thy Cherubims of Tender-mercy  
 Stretching their Wings sublime over the Little ones of Albion.  
 O Human Imagination! O Divine Body! I have Crucified,  
 I have turned my back upon thee into the Wastes of Moral Law;  
 There Babylon is builded in the Waste, founded in Human desolation.  
 O Babylon, thy Watchman stands over thee in the night;  
 Thy severe Judge all the day long proves thee, O Babylon,  
 With provings of destruction, with giving thee thy heart's desire.  
 But Albion is cast forth to the Potter, his Children to the Builders  
 To build Babylon, because they have forsaken Jerusalem.  
 The Walls of Babylon are Souls of Men; her Gates the Groans  
 Of Nations; her Towers are the Miseries of once happy Families;  
 Her streets are paved with Destruction, her Houses built with Death;  
 Her Palaces with Hell and the Grave; her Synagogues with Torments  
 Of ever-hardening Despair squar'd and polish'd with cruel skill.  
 Yet thou wast lovely as the summer cloud upon my hills  
 When Jerusalem was thy heart's desire in times of youth and love.  
 Thy sons came to Jerusalem with gifts, she sent them away

With blessings on their hands and on their feet, blessings of gold  
 And pearl and diamond; thy Daughters sang in her Courts.  
 They came up to Jerusalem; they walked before Albion;  
 In the Exchanges of London every Nation walk'd,  
 And London walk'd in every Nation mutual in love and harmony."

6

Albion spoke: "Who art thou that appearest in gloomy pomp,  
 Involving the Divine Vision in colours of autumn ripeness?  
 I never saw thee till this time, nor beheld life abstracted,  
 Nor darkness immingled with light on my furrow'd field.  
 Whence camest thou? who art thou, O loveliest? the Divine Vision  
 Is as nothing before thee; faded is all life and joy!"

Vala replied in clouds of tears, Albion's garment embracing:—

"I was a City and a Temple built by Albion's Children;  
 I was a Garden planted with beauty. I allured on hill and valley  
 The River of Life to flow against my walls and among my trees.  
 Vala was Albion's Bride and Wife in great Eternity,  
 The loveliest of the daughters of Eternity when in daybreak  
 I emanated from Luvah over the Towers of Jerusalem,  
 And in her Courts among her little Children offering up  
 The Sacrifice of fanatic love! why loved I Jerusalem?  
 Why was I one with her embracing in the Vision of Jesus?  
 Wherefore did I loving create love, which never yet  
 Immingled God and Man, when thou and I hid the Divine Vision  
 In cloud[s] of secret gloom which, behold, involve me round about!  
 Know me now, Albion; look upon me. I alone am Beauty.  
 The Imaginative Human Form is but a breathing of Vala;  
 I breathe him forth into the Heaven from my Secret Cave,  
 Born of the Woman to obey the Woman, O Albion, the mighty!  
 For the Divine appearance is Brotherhood, but I am Love,  
 Elevate into the Region of Brotherhood with my red fires."

"Art thou Vala?" replied Albion, "image of my repose.  
 O how I tremble! how my members pour down milky fear!  
 A dewy garment covers me all over, all manhood is gone!  
 Is not that Sun thy husband, and that Moon thy glimmering Veil?  
 Are not the Stars of heaven thy Children? art thou not Babylon?  
 Art thou Nature, Mother of all? is Jerusalem thy Daughter?  
 In Eternity they neither marry nor are given in marriage.  
 Albion, the high Cliff of the Atlantic, is become a barren Land."



There is a place where Contrarities are equally True.  
 This place is called Beulah.<sup>1</sup> It is a pleasant, lovely Shadow  
 Where no dispute can come, because of those who Sleep.

Beulah is evermore Created around Eternity, appearing  
 To the Inhabitants of Eden, around them on all sides.  
 But Beulah to its Inhabitants appears within each district  
 As the beloved infant in his mother's bosom round encircled  
 With arms of love and pity and sweet compassion. But to  
 The Sons of Eden the moony habitations of Beulah  
 Are from Great Eternity a mild and pleasant Rest.

And it is thus Created: Lo, the Eternal Great Humanity,  
 To whom be Glory and Dominion Evermore, Amen,  
 Walks among all his awful Family, seen in every face.  
 As the breath of the Almighty, such are the words of man to man,  
 In the great wars of Eternity, in fury of Poetic Inspiration,  
 To build the Universe stupendous, Mental forms Creating.

But the Emanations trembled exceedingly, nor could they  
 Live, because the life of Man was too exceeding unbounded.  
 His joy became terrible to them, they trembled and wept,  
 Crying with one voice: "Give us a habitation and a place  
 In which we may be hidden under the shadow of wings;  
 For if we who are but for a time, and who pass away in winter,  
 Behold these wonders of Eternity, we shall consume;  
 But you, O our Fathers and Brothers, remain in Eternity.  
 But grant us a Temporal Habitation; do you speak  
 To us; we will obey your words as you obey Jesus  
 The Eternal, who is blessed for ever and ever. Amen."

So spake the lovely Emanations, and there appeared a pleasant  
 Mild Shadow above, beneath, and on all sides round.

Into this pleasant Shadow all the weak and weary,  
 Like Women and Children, were taken away as on wings  
 Of dovelike softness, and shadowy habitations prepared for them.  
 But every Man return'd and went, still going forward thro'  
 The Bosom of the Father in Eternity on Eternity;  
 Neither did any lack or fall into Error without  
 A Shadow to repose in all the Days of happy Eternity.

<sup>1</sup> Blake seems to mean by Beulah a realm of pleasant, innocent delusions, the asylum of weak and kindly natures, while stronger intellects grapple with realities.



There is from Great Eternity a mild and pleasant rest  
 Named Beulah, a soft, moony universe, feminine, lovely,  
 Pure, mild and gentle, given in Mercy to all those who sleep,  
 Eternally created by the Lamb of God around  
 On all sides, within and without the Universal Man.  
 The Daughters of Beulah follow sleepers in all their dreams,  
 Creating spaces, lest they fall into Eternal Death.

And there was heard a great lamenting in Beulah; . . . and they  
 said:—

“Why did you take Vengeance, O ye Sons of the mighty Albion?  
 Planting these Oaken Groves; erecting these Dragon Temples.  
 Injury the Lord heals, but Vengeance cannot be healed.  
 As the Sons of Albion have done to Luvah, so they have in him  
 Done to the Divine Lord and Saviour, who suffers with those that  
 suffer;

For not one sparrow can suffer, and the whole Universe not suffer also  
 In all its Regions, and its Father and Saviour not pity and weep.  
 But Vengeance is the destroyer of Grace and Repentance in the bosom  
 Of the Injurer, in which the Divine Lamb is cruelly slain.  
 Descend, O Lamb of God, and take away the imputation of Sin  
 By the Creation of States and the deliverance of Individuals Ever-  
 more. Amen.”

Thus wept they in Beulah over the Four Regions of Albion.

Then Los heaved his thund'ring Bellows on the Valley of Middlesex;  
 And thus he chaunted his Song; the Daughters of Albion reply.

“What may Man be, who can tell? But what may Woman be,  
 To have power over Man from Cradle to corruptible Grave?  
 He who is an Infant, and whose Cradle is a Manger,  
 Knoweth the Infant sorrow, whence it came, and where it goeth,  
 And who weave it a Cradle of the grass that withereth away.  
 This World is all a Cradle for the errèd wandering Phantom.

Entune, Daughters of Albion, your hymning Chorus mildly;  
 Cord of affection thrilling extatic on the iron Reel,  
 To the golden Loom of Love, to the moth-labour'd Woof,  
 A Garment and Cradle weaving for the infantine Terror;

For fear, at entering the gate into our world of cruel  
Lamentation, it flee back and hide in Non-Entity's dark wild.  
The Sun shall be a Scythed Chariot of Britain; the Moon, a Ship  
In the British Ocean, Created by Los's Hammer; measured out  
Into Days and Nights and Years and Months, to travel with my feet  
Over these desolate rocks of Albion. O daughters of despair!  
Rock the Cradle, and in mild melodies tell me where found,  
What you have enwoven with so much tears and care, so much  
Tender artifice, to laugh, to weep, to learn, to know;  
Remember! recollect! what dark befel in wintry days."

"O it was lost for ever, and we found it not; it came  
And wept at our wintry Door. Look! look! behold Gwendolen  
Is become a Clod of Clay; Merlin is a Worm of the Valley!"  
Then Los uttered with Hammer and Anvil: "Chaunt, revoice!  
I mind not your laugh, and your frown I not fear; and  
You must my dictate obey from your gold-beam'd Looms; trill  
Gentle to Albion's Watchman, on Albion's mountains re-echo,  
And rock the Cradle [the] while. Ah me! Of that Eternal Man,  
And of the cradl'd Infancy in his bowels of compassion,  
Who fell beneath his instruments of husbandry and became  
Subservient to the clods of the furrow, the cattle and even  
The emmet and earth-worm are his superiors and his lords."

Then the response came warbling from trilling Looms in Albion:  
"We women tremble at the light therefore—hiding fearful,  
The Divine Vision with Curtain and Veil and fleshly Tabernacle."

And the voices of Bath and Canterbury and York and Edinburgh cry  
Over the Plow of Nations, in the strong hand of Albion thundering  
along  
Weeping over his Children in Stonehenge, in Malden, and Colchester,  
Round the Rocky Peak of Derbyshire, London Stone, and Rosamond's  
Bower:

"What is a Wife and what is a Harlot? What is a Church? and  
What  
Is a Theatre? are they Two and not One? can they Exist Separate?  
Are not Religion and Politics the Same Thing? Brotherhood is  
Religion!  
O Demonstrations of Reason, Dividing Families in Cruelty and  
Pride!"

But Albion fled from the Divine Vision with the Plow of Nations  
enflaming,  
Till he came to the Rock of Ages, and he took his Seat upon the Rock.

In flaming fire within the Furnaces the Divine Vision appear'd  
On Albion's hills, often walking from the Furnaces in clouds  
And flames among the Druid Temples and the Starry Wheels,  
Gather'd Jerusalem's Children in his arms and bore them like  
A Shepherd in the night of Albion which overspread all the Earth.

"I gave thee liberty and life, O lovely Jerusalem!  
And thou hast bound me down upon the Stems of Vegetation.  
I gave thee Sheep-walks upon the Spanish Mountains, Jerusalem,  
I gave thee Priam's City and the Isles of Grecia lovely;  
They spread forth like a lovely root into the Garden of God;  
They were as Adam before me, united into one Man.  
They stood in innocence, and their skiey tent reached over Asia,  
To Nimrod's Tower, to Ham and Canaan, walking with Mizraim  
Upon the Egyptian Nile, with solemn songs to Grecia,  
And sweet Hesperia, even to Great Chaldea and Teshina,  
Following thee as a Shepherd by the Four Rivers of Eden.  
Why wilt thou rend thyself apart, Jerusalem,  
And build this Babylon and sacrifice in secret Groves  
Among the Gods of Asia, among the fountains of pitch and nitre?

Therefore thy mountains are become barren, Jerusalem;  
Thy Valleys, Plains of burning sand, thy Rivers, waters of death.  
Thy Villages die of the Famine, and thy Cities  
Beg bread from house to house, lovely Jerusalem.  
Why wilt thou deface thy beauty and the beauty of thy little ones  
To please thy Idols in the pretended chastities of Uncircumcision?  
Thy sons are lovelier than Egypt or Assyria; wherefore  
Dost thou blacken their beauty by a secluded place of rest,  
And a peculiar tabernacle, to cut the integuments of beauty  
Into veils of tears and sorrows, O lovely Jerusalem?  
They have persuaded thee to this, therefore their end shall come,  
And I will lead thee thro' the wilderness in shadow of my cloud,  
And in my love I will lead thee, lovely Shadow of Sleeping Albion."  
This is the Song of the Lamb, sung by Slaves in evening time.

[*The Divine Vision comforts Jerusalem by a vision of Joseph and Mary.*]

But the Divine Lamb stood beside Jerusalem; oft she saw  
The Lineaments Divine, and oft the Voice heard, and oft she said:  
"O Lord and Saviour, have the Gods of the Heathen pierced thee,  
Or hast thou been pierced in the House of thy Friends?



Art thou alive, and livest thou for evermore? or art thou  
 Not, but a delusive shadow, a thought that liveth not?  
 Babel mocks, saying there is no God nor Son of God,  
 That thou, O Human Imagination, O Divine Body, art all  
 A delusion; but I know thee, O Lord, when thou arisest upon  
 My weary eyes even in this dungeon and this iron wall.  
 The Stars of Albion cruel rise; thou bindest to sweet influences;  
 For thou also sufferest with me, altho' I behold thee not;  
 And altho' I sin and blaspheme thy holy name, thou pitiest me,  
 Because thou knowest I am deluded by the turning mills,  
 And by these visions of pity and love, because of Albion's death."  
 Thus spake Jerusalem, and thus the Divine Voice replied:—

"Mild Shade of Man, pitiest thou these Visions of terror and woe?  
 Give forth thy pity and love. Fear not! lo, I am with thee always.  
 Only believe in me, that I have power to raise from death  
 Thy Brother who Sleepeth in Albion; fear not, trembling Shade!  
 Behold! in the Visions of Elohim Jehovah, behold Joseph and Mary,  
 And be comforted, O Jerusalem, in the Visions of Jehovah Elohim."

She lookèd and saw Joseph the Carpenter in Nazareth, and Mary,  
 His espousèd Wife. And Mary said, "If thou put me away from thee  
 Dost thou not murder me?" Joseph spoke in anger and fury: "Should I  
 Marry a Harlot and an Adulteress?" Mary answer'd: "Art thou  
 more pure

Than thy Maker, who forgiveth Sins and calls again Her that is Lost?  
 Tho' She hates, he calls her again in love. I love my dear Joseph,  
 But he driveth me away from his presence; yet I hear the voice of God  
 In the voice of my Husband—tho' he is angry for a moment he will  
 not

Utterly cast me away; if I were pure, never could I taste the sweets  
 Of the Forgiveness of Sins; if I were holy, I never could behold the  
 tears

Of love, of him who loves me in the midst of his anger in furnace of  
 fire."

"Ah, my Mary," said Joseph, weeping over and embracing her closely  
 in

His arms, "Doth he forgive Jerusalem and not exact Purity from  
 her who is

Polluted? I heard his voice in my sleep and his Angel in my dream,  
 Saying: 'Doth Jehovah Forgive a Debt only on condition that it shall  
 Be payèd? Doth he Forgive Pollution only on conditions of Purity?  
 That Debt is not Forgiven! That Pollution is not Forgiven!  
 Such is the Forgiveness of the Gods, the Moral Virtues of the  
 Heathen, whose tender Mercies are Cruelty; but Jehovah's Salvation



Is without Money and without Price, in the Continual Forgiveness  
of Sins,  
In the Perpetual Mutual Sacrifice in Great Eternity. For behold!  
There is none that liveth and Sinneth not! And this is the Covenant  
Of Jehovah: 'If you forgive one another, so shall Jehovah forgive  
You;

That He Himself may Dwell among You. Fear not, then, to take  
To thee Mary thy Wife, for she is with Child by the Holy Ghost.' "

Then Mary burst forth into a Song! she flowèd like a River of  
Many Streams in the arms of Joseph, and gave forth her tears of joy  
Like many waters. . . . And I heard the voice among  
The Reapers Saying: "Am I Jerusalem, the lost Adulteress? or am I  
Babylon come up to Jerusalem?" And another voice answer'd saying:  
"Does the voice of my Lord call me again? am I pure thro' his Mercy  
And Pity? Am I become lovely as a Virgin in his sight, who am  
Indeed a Harlot drunken with the Sacrifice of Idols? Does he  
Call her pure, as he did in the days of her Infancy, when She  
Was cast out to the loathing of her person? The Chaldean took  
Me from my Cradle; the Amalekite stole me away upon his Camels  
Before I had ever beheld with love the Face of Jehovah, or known  
That there was a God of Mercy. O Mercy, O Divine Humanity!  
O Forgiveness and Pity and Compassion! If I were Pure I should  
never

Have known Thee. If I were Unpolluted I should never have  
Glorified thy Holiness or rejoiced in thy great Salvation."

Mary leaned her side against Jerusalem. Jerusalem received  
The Infant into her hands in the Visions of Jehovah. Times passed  
on;

Jerusalem fainted over the Cross and Sepulcher. She heard the voice:  
"Every Harlot was once a Virgin, every Criminal an Infant Love.  
Repose on me till the morning of the Grave; I am thy life."

Jerusalem replied:—"I am an outcast; Albion is dead;  
I am left to the trampling foot and the spurning heel.  
A Harlot I am call'd. I am sold from street to street;  
I am defaced with blows and with the dirt of the Prison;  
And wilt thou become my Husband, O my Lord and Saviour?  
But I thy Magdalen behold thy Spiritual Risen Body.  
Shall Albion arise? I know he shall arise at the Last Day!  
I know that in my flesh I shall see God; but Emanations  
Are weak, they know not whence they are, nor whither tend."

Jesus replied:—"I am the Resurrection and the Life;  
 I die, and pass the limits of possibility, as it appears. . . . ;  
 But will prepare a way for my banished ones to return.  
 Come now with me into the villages, walk thro' all the cities.  
 Tho' thou art taken to prison and judgment, starved in the streets,  
 I will command the cloud to give thee food and the hard rock  
 To flow with milk and wine; tho' thou seest me not a season,  
 Even a long season, and a hard journey and a howling wilderness,  
 Only believe and trust in me. Lo, I am always with thee!"

So spoke the Lamb of God, while Luvah's Cloud reddening above  
 Burst forth in streams of blood upon the heavens, and dark night  
 Involv'd Jerusalem, and the Wheels of Albion's Sons turn'd hoarse  
 Over the Mountains, and the fires blaz'd on Druid Altars,<sup>1</sup>  
 And the Sun set in Tyburn's Brook where Victims howl and cry.

13

*[England shrinks and withers under Albion's mistaken ideals.]*

As their eye and ear shrunk, the heavens shrunk away,  
 The Divine Vision became first a burning flame, then a column  
 Of fire, then an awful fiery wheel surrounding earth and heaven;  
 And then a globe of blood wandering distant in an unknown night.  
 Afar into the unknown night the mountains fled away;  
 Six months of mortality, a summer; and six months of mortality, a  
 winter.

They look forth; the Sun is shrunk, the Heavens are shrunk  
 Away into the far remote, and the Trees and Mountains wither'd  
 Into indefinite cloudy shadows in darkness and separation.

They look forth from Stone-henge; from the Cove round London  
 Stone

They look on one another; the mountain calls out to the mountain;  
 Plinlimmon shrunk away; Snowdon trembled; the mountains  
 Of Wales and Scotland beheld the descending War; the routed flying.  
 Red run the streams of Albion; Thames is drunk with blood;  
 The inhabitants are sick to death; they labour to divide into Days  
 And Nights the uncertain Periods, and into Weeks and Months. In  
 vain

They send the Dove and Raven; and in vain the Serpent over the  
 mountains;

And in vain the Eagle and Lion over the fourfold wilderness.

<sup>1</sup> False conventions and religions.

They return not, but generate in rocky places desolate;  
 They return not; but build a habitation separate from Man.  
 The Sun forgets his course; like a drunken man he hesitates,  
 Upon the Cheselden hills, thinking to sleep on the Severn;  
 In vain; he is hurried afar into an unknown Night,  
 He bleeds in torrents of blood, as he rolls thro' heaven above  
 He chokes up the paths of the sky; the Moon is leprous as snow;  
 Trembling and descending down, seeking to rest upon high Mona;  
 Scattering her leprous snows in flakes of disease over Albion.  
 The Stars flee remote; the heaven is iron, the earth is sulphur,  
 And all the mountains and hills shrink up like a withering gourd,  
 As the Senses of Men shrink together under the Knife of flint,  
 In the hands of Albion's Daughters, among the Druid Temples.

14

Naked Jerusalem lay before the Gates upon Mount Zion,  
 The Hill of Giants, all her foundations levell'd with the dust;  
 And thus her voice went forth in the darkness of Philisthea:—

"My brother and my father are no more! God hath forsaken me!  
 The arrows of the Almighty pour upon me and my children.  
 I have sinned and am an outcaste from the Divine Presence!

My tents are fall'n! my pillars are in ruins! my children dash'd  
 Upon Egypt's<sup>1</sup> iron floors and the marble pavements of Assyria.  
 I melt my soul in reasonings among the towers of Heshbon.  
 Mount Zion is become a cruel rock, and no more dew  
 Nor rain; no more the spring of the rock appears; but cold,  
 Hard, and obdurate are the furrows of the mountain of wine and oil.  
 The mountain of blessing is itself a curse and an astonishment.  
 The hills of Judea are fallen with me into the deepest hell,  
 Away from the Nations of the Earth, and from the Cities of the  
 Nations.

I walk to Ephraim, I seek for Shiloh; I walk like a lost sheep  
 Among precipices of despair; in Goshen I seek for light  
 In vain, and in Gilead for a physician and a comforter.  
 They are become narrow places in a little and dark land;  
 How distant far from Albion! his hills and his valleys no more  
 Receive the feet of Jerusalem; they have cast me quite away;  
 And Albion is himself shrunk to a narrow rock in the midst of the sea.  
 The plains of Sussex and Surrey, their hills of flocks and herds

<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to say how far Blake meant geographical names to be symbolic, how far literal. As much as possible, we prefer to take them literally. Thus in this passage we should conceive of the Spirit of Liberty (Jerusalem) surveying the nations in a vast, Miltonic panorama, and lamenting the universal presence of religious, scholastic, and social tyranny.



No more seek to Jerusalem nor to the sound of my Holy-ones.  
 The Fifty-two Counties of England are harden'd against me  
 As if I was not their Mother; they despise me and cast me out.  
 London cover'd the whole Earth, England encompass'd the Nations,  
 And all the Nations of the Earth were seen in the Cities of Albion.  
 My pillars reach'd from sea to sea; London beheld me come  
 From my east and from my west; he blessed me and gave  
 His children to my breasts, his sons and daughters to my knees;  
 His agèd parents sought me out in every city and village.  
 They discern'd my countenance with joy; they shew'd me to their sons,  
 Saying, 'Lo, Jerusalem is here! she sitteth in our secret chambers.'  
 The river Severn stay'd his course at my command;  
 Thames poured his waters into my basons and baths;  
 Albion gave me to the whole Earth to walk up and down, to pour  
 Joy upon every mountain, to teach songs to the shepherd and plowman.  
 I taught the ships of the sea to sing the songs of Zion;  
 Italy saw me, in sublime astonishment; France was wholly mine,  
 As my garden and as my secret bath. Spain was my heavenly couch;  
 I slept in his golden hills; the Lamb of God met me there.  
 There we walked as in our secret chamber among our little ones;  
 They looked upon our loves with joy; they beheld our secret joys  
 With holy raptures of adoration rap'd sublime in the Visions of God.  
 Germany, Poland, and the North wooed my footsteps; they found  
 My gates in all their mountains, and my curtains in all their vales;  
 The furniture of their houses was the furniture of my chamber.  
 Turkey and Grecia saw my instr'ments of music, they arose,  
 They seiz'd the harp, the flute, the mellow horn of Jerusalem's joy;  
 They sounded thanksgivings in my courts; Egypt and Lybia heard;  
 The swarthy sons of Ethiopia stood round the Lamb of God  
 Enquiring for Jerusalem; he led them up my steps to my altar.  
 And thou, America! I once beheld thee, but now behold no more  
 Thy golden mountains, where my Cherubim and Seraphim rejoic'd  
 Together among my little ones. But now my Altars run with blood,  
 My fires are corrupt, my incense is a cloudy pestilence  
 Of seven diseases! Once a continual cloud of salvation rose  
 From all my myriads; once the Four-fold World rejoic'd among  
 The pillars of Jerusalem, between my wingèd Cherubim;  
 But now I am clos'd out from them in the narrow passages  
 Of the valleys of destruction, into a dark land of pitch and bitumen,  
 From Albion's Tomb afar, and from the four-fold wonders of God."

While Los arose upon his Watch, and down from Golgonooza,  
 Putting on his golden sandals to walk from mountain to mountain,



He takes his way, girding himself with gold, and in his hand  
Holding his iron mace. The Spectre remains attentive.  
Alternate they watch in night; alternate labour in day  
Before the Furnaces labouring, while Los all night watches  
The stars rising and setting, and the meteors and terrors of night.  
With him went down the Dogs of Leutha<sup>1</sup> at his feet;  
They lap the water of the trembling Thames, then follow swift,  
And thus he heard the voice of Albion's daughters on Euphrates:—

“Our Father Albion's land; O it was a lovely land! and the Daughters  
of Beulah  
Walked up and down in its green mountains, . . . and the Brook of  
Albion's River.

We builded Jerusalem as a City and a Temple; from Lambeth  
We began our Foundations, lovely Lambeth. O lovely Hills  
Of Camberwell, we shall behold you no more in glory and pride,  
For Jerusalem lies in ruins, and the Furnaces of Los are builded there;  
You are now shrunk up to a narrow Rock in the midst of the Sea.”

And thus Los replies upon his Watch; the Valleys listen silent,  
The Stars stand still to hear, Jerusalem and Vala cease to mourn.  
His voice is heard from Albion; the Alps and Appenines  
Listen! Hermon and Lebanon bow their crownèd heads;  
Babel and Shinar look toward the Western Gate, they sit down  
Silent at his voice; they view the red Globe of fire in Los's hand  
As he walks from Furnace to Furnace, directing the Labourers;  
And this is the Song of Los, the Song that he sings on his Watch:—

“O lovely mild Jerusalem! O Shiloh of Mount Ephraim!  
I see thy Gates of precious stones, thy Walls of gold and silver.  
Thou art the soft reflected Image of the Sleeping Man  
Who, stretch'd on Albion's rocks, reposes amidst his Twenty-eight  
Cities, where Beulah lovely terminates in the hills and valleys of  
Albion.

Why wilt thou rend thyself apart and build an Earthly Kingdom  
To reign in pride and to oppress, and to mix the Cup of Delusion?  
O thou that dwellest with Babylon! Come forth, O lovely-one.

I see thy Form, O lovely, mild Jerusalem! Wing'd with Six Wings  
In the opacous Bosom of the Sleeper, lovely, Three-fold  
In Head and Heart and Reins, three Universes of love and beauty.  
Thy forehead bright; Holiness to the Lord, with Gates of pearl,  
Reflects Eternity beneath thy azure wings of feathery down,  
Ribb'd, delicate, and cloth'd with feather'd gold and azure and purple,

<sup>1</sup> Leutha = sensuous, self-indulgent pleasure.

From thy white shoulders shadowing purity in holiness.  
Thence, feather'd with soft crimson of the ruby, bright as fire,  
Spreading into the azure wings which like a canopy  
Bends over thy immortal Head in which Eternity dwells.  
Albion, belovèd Land, I see thy mountains and thy hills  
And valleys, and thy pleasant Cities, Holiness to the Lord.

Thy Bosom white, translucent, cover'd with immortal gems,  
A sublime ornament not obscuring the outlines of beauty,  
Terrible to behold, for thy extreme beauty and perfection.  
I see the New Jerusalem descending out of Heaven  
Between thy Wings of gold and silver, feather'd immortal,  
Clear as the rainbow, as the cloud of the Sun's tabernacle.

Thy Reins cover'd with Wings translucent, sometimes covering  
And sometimes spread abroad reveal the flames of holiness  
Which like a robe covers, and like a Veil of Seraphim  
In flaming fire unceasing burns from Eternity to Eternity.  
There Bells of silver round thy knees, living, articulate  
Comforting sounds of love and harmony; and on thy feet  
Sandals of gold and pearl; and Egypt and Assyria before me,  
The Isles of Javan, Philistea, Tyre, and Lebanon."

Thus Los sings upon his Watch, walking from Furnace to Furnace.  
He seizes his Hammer; every hour flames surround him as  
He beats; seas roll beneath his feet, tempests muster  
Around his head, the thick hail stones stand ready to obey  
His voice in the black cloud; his Sons labour in thunders  
At his Furnaces; his Daughters at their Looms sing woes.

16

[*This extract and the two following give pictures of the intellectual apocalypse described by Blake at the end of each of his three longest poems.*]

The sun has left his blackness and has found a fresher morning,  
And the mild moon rejoices in the clear and cloudless night;  
And Man walks forth from midst of fires; the evil is all consumed.  
His eyes behold the angelic spheres among the night and day;  
The stars consumed, like a lamp blown out, and in their stead, behold!  
One earth—one sea beneath; nor erring globes wander, but stars  
Of fire rise up nightly from the ocean; and one sun  
Each morning, like a new-born Man, issues with songs of joy,  
Calling the ploughman to his labour, the shepherd to his rest.  
He walks upon the eternal mountains, raising his heavenly voice,

Conversing with the animal forms of wisdom night and day,  
 That, risen from the sea of fire, renewed walk over the earth;  
 For Tharmas brought his flocks upon the hills, and in the vales  
 Around the Eternal Man's bright tent the little children play  
 Among the woolly flocks. The hammer of Urthona sounds  
 In the deep caves beneath, his limbs renewed; his lions roar  
 Around the furnaces, and in evening sport upon the plains.  
 They raise their faces from the earth, conversing with the Man:

"How is it we have walked through fire and yet are not consumed?  
 How is it that all things are changed, even as in ancient times?  
 The sun arises from his dewy bed, and the fresh airs  
 Play in his smiling beams, giving the seeds of life to grow,  
 And the fresh earth beams forth ten thousand thousand springs of  
 life."

17

Then as a Moony Ark Ololon descended to Felpham's Vale  
 Into the Fires of Intellect that rejoic'd in Felpham's Vale  
 Around the Starry Eight. With one accord the Starry Eight became  
 One Man, Jesus, the Saviour wonderful; round his limbs  
 The Clouds of Ololon folded as a Garment dipped in blood,  
 Written within and without in woven letters; and the Writing  
 Is the Divine Revelation in the Literal expression,  
 A Garment of War. I heard it named the Woof of Six Thousand  
 Years.

And I beheld the Twenty-four Cities of Albion  
 Arise upon their Thrones to Judge the Nations of the Earth,  
 And the Immortal Four, in whom the Twenty-four appear Four-fold,  
 Arose around Albion's body. Jesus wept, and walked forth  
 From Felpham's Vale, clothed in Clouds of blood, to enter into  
 Albion's Bosom, the bosom of death, and the Four surrounded him  
 In the Column of Fire in Felpham's Vale; then to their mouths the  
 Four

Applied their Four Trumpets, and then sounded to the Four winds.

Terror struck in the Vale. I stood at that immortal sound;  
 My bones trembled, I fell outstretch'd upon the path  
 A moment, and my Soul return'd into its mortal state,  
 And my sweet Shadow of Delight stood trembling by my side.

Immediately the Lark mounted with a loud trill from Felpham's Vale,  
 And the Wild Thyme from Wimbleton's green and unpurpled Hills,  
 And Los and Enitharmon rose over the Hills of Surrey.  
 Their clouds roll over London with a south wind, soft Oothoon



Pants in the Vales of Lambeth, weeping o'er her Human Harvest;  
Los listens to the Cry of the Poor Man, his Cloud  
Over London in volume terrific, low bended in anger.

[The] Wine-presses and Barns stand open; the Ovens are prepar'd,  
The Waggon ready; terrific Lions and Tigers sport and play;  
All Animals upon the Earth are prepar'd in all their strength  
To go forth to the Great Harvest and Vintage of the Nations.

18

Albion cold lays on his Rock; storms and snows beat round him,  
Beneath the Furnaces and the starry Wheels and the Immortal Tomb;  
Howling winds cover him; roaring seas dash furious against him;  
In the deep darkness broad lightnings glare, long thunders roll.

The weeds of Death enwrap his hands and feet, blown incessant,  
And wash'd incessant by the for-ever restless sea-waves foaming  
abroad

Upon the white Rock. England a Female Shadow, as deadly damps  
Of the Mines of Cornwall and Derbyshire lays upon his bosom heavy,  
Movèd by the wind in volumes of thick cloud returning, folding round  
His loins and bosom unremovable by swelling storms and loud rending  
Of enraged thunders. Around them the Starry Wheels of their Giant  
Sons

Revolve, and over them the Furnaces of Los and the Immortal Tomb,  
around,

Erin sitting in the Tomb, to watch them unceasing night and day;  
And the Body of Albion was closèd apart from all Nations.

Over them the famish'd Eagle screams on bony Wings, and around  
Them howls the Wolf of famine; deep heaves the Ocean, black,  
thundering

Around the wormy Garments of Albion, then pausing in deathlike  
silence.

Time was Finished! The Breath Divine Breathed over Albion,  
Beneath the Furnaces and starry Wheels and in the Immortal Tomb,  
And England, who is Brittannia, awoke from Death on Albion's  
bosom.

"O piteous Sleep! O piteous Dream! O God! O God! awake! I have  
slain

In Dreams of Chastity and Moral Law, I have Murdered Albion.  
Ah!

O all ye Nations of the Earth, behold ye the Jealous Wife."



Her voice pierc'd Albion's clay cold ear, he moved upon the Rock.  
The Breath Divine went forth upon the morning hills. Albion mov'd  
Upon the Rock, he open'd his eyelids in pain; in pain he mov'd  
His stony members; he saw England. Ah, shall the Dead live again!

The Breath Divine went forth over the morning hills. Albion rose  
In anger, the wrath of God breaking bright, flaming on all sides  
around

His awful limbs; into the Heavens he walkèd, clothèd in flames,  
Loud thund'ring, with broad flashes of flaming lightning and pillars  
Of fire, speaking the Words of Eternity in Human Forms, in direful  
Revolutions of Action and Passion, thro' the Four Elements on all  
sides,

Surrounding his awful Members. Thou seest the Sun in heavy clouds  
Struggling to rise above the Mountains; in his burning hand  
He takes his Bow, then chooses out his arrows of flaming gold;  
Murmuring the Bowstring breathes with ardour; clouds roll round the  
Horns of the wide Bow; loud sounding winds sport on the mountain  
brows,

Compelling Urizen to his Furrow, and Tharmas to his Sheepfold,  
And Luvah to his Loom. Urthona he beheld, mighty, labouring at  
His Anvil, in the Great Spectre Los unwearied, labouring and  
weeping;

Therefore the Sons of Eden praise Urthona's Spectre<sup>1</sup> in songs,  
Because he kept the Divine Vision in time of trouble.

As the Sun and Moon lead forward the Visions of Heaven and Earth,  
England, who is Britannia, enter'd Albion's bosom rejoicing,  
Rejoicing in his indignation, adoring his wrathful rebuke.  
She who adores not your frowns will only loathe your smiles.

As the Sun and Moon lead forward the Visions of Heaven and Earth,  
England, who is Britannia, entered Albion's bosom rejoicing.  
Then Jesus appeared standing by Albion as the Good Shepherd  
By the lost Sheep that he hath found; and Albion knew that it  
Was the Lord, the Universal Humanity, and Albion saw his Form,  
A Man, and they conversed as Man with Man in Ages of Eternity;  
And the Divine Appearance was the likeness and similitude of Los.

Albion said: "O Lord, what can I do? my Selfhood cruel  
Marches against thee deceitful from Sinai and from Edom  
Into the Wilderness of Judah to meet thee in his pride.  
I behold the Visions of my deadly Sleep of Six Thousand Years,  
Dazzling around thy skirts like a Serpent of precious stones and gold;  
I know it is my Self, O my Divine Creator and Redeemer."

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Los.

Jesus replied: "Fear not, Albion; unless I die thou canst not live,  
But if I die I shall arise again and thou with me;  
This is Friendship and Brotherhood, without it Man Is Not."

So Jesus spoke; the Covering Cherub coming on in darkness  
Overshadow'd them, and Jesus said: "Thus do Men in Eternity,  
One for another to put off by forgiveness every sin."

Albion reply'd: "Cannot Man exist without Mysterious  
Offering of Self for Another? is this Friendship and Brotherhood?  
I see thee in the likeness and similitude of Los my Friend."

Jesus said: "Wouldest thou love one who never died  
For thee, or ever die for one who had not died for thee?  
And if God dieth not for Man and giveth not himself  
Eternally for Man, Man could not exist, for Man is Love,  
As God is Love; every kindness to another is a little Death  
In the Divine Image, nor can Man exist but by Brotherhood."

So saying, the Cloud overshadowing divided them asunder.  
Albion stood in terror, not for himself but for his Friend  
Divine, and Self was lost in the contemplation of faith  
And wonder at the Divine Mercy and at Los's sublime honour.

"Do I sleep amidst danger to Friends? O my Cities and Counties,  
Do you sleep? rouse up, rouse up, Eternal Death is abroad!"

So Albion spoke, and threw himself into the Furnaces of affliction.  
All was a Vision, all a Dream; the Furnaces became  
Fountains of Living Waters flowing from the Humanity Divine;  
And all the Cities of Albion rose from their Slumbers, and All  
The Sons and Daughters of Albion on soft clouds Waking from Sleep.  
Soon all around remote the Heavens burnt with flaming fires;  
And Urizen and Luvah, and Tharmas and Urthona arose into  
Albion's Bosom. Then Albion stood before Jesus in the Clouds  
Of Heaven Fourfold among the Visions of God in Eternity.

"Awake, Awake, Jerusalem! O lovely Emanation of Albion,  
Awake and overspread all Nations as in Ancient Time;  
For lo! the Night of Death is past, and the Eternal Day  
Appears upon our Hills. Awake, Jerusalem, and come away!"

So spake the Vision of Albion, and in him so spake in my hearing  
The Universal Father. Then Albion stretch'd his hand into Infinitude,  
And took his Bow Fourfold; the Vision for bright beaming Urizen  
Laid his hand on the South, and took a breathing Bow of Carvèd  
Gold.

Luvah, his hand stretch'd to the East, and bore a Silver Bow bright  
shining;  
Tharmas Westward a Bow of Brass pure flaming, richly wrought,  
Urthona Northward in thick storms, a Bow of Iron terrible thunder-  
ing.

And the Bow is a Male and Female, and the Quiver of the Arrows  
of Love  
Are the Children of his Bow, a Bow of Mercy and Loving-kindness,  
laying  
Open the hidden Heart in Wars of mutual Benevolence, Wars of  
Love;  
And the Hand of Man grasps firm between the Male and Female  
Loves,  
And he Clothed himself in Bow and Arrows, in awful state Fourfold;  
In the midst of his Twenty-eight Cities, each with his Bow breathing.  
Then each an Arrow flaming from his Quiver fitted carefully;  
They drew fourfold the unreprouable String, bending thro' the wide  
Heavens  
The hornèd Bow Fourfold; loud sounding flew the flaming Arrow  
fourfold.

Murmuring the Bow-string breathes with ardour. Clouds roll round  
the horns  
Of the wide Bow; loud sounding Winds sport on the Mountain's  
brows;  
The Druid Spectre<sup>1</sup> was Annihilate, loud thund'ring, rejoicing, terrific,  
vanishing,  
Fourfold Annihilation, and at the clangor of the Arrows of Intellect  
The innumerable Chariots of the Almighty appear'd in Heaven.

And they conversed together in Visionary forms, dramatic, which  
bright  
Redounded from their Tongues in thunderous majesty, in Visions,  
In new Expanses, creating exemplars of Memory and of Intellect,  
Creating Space, Creating Time according to the wonders Divine  
Of Human Imagination, throughout all the Three Regions immense  
Of Childhood, Manhood, and Old Age; and the all tremendous  
unfathomable Nonens  
Of Death was seen in regeneration terrific or complacent. . . . And  
they walked  
To and fro in Eternity, as One Man reflecting each in each and  
clearly seen

<sup>1</sup> The Druids and Druid Spectre probably symbolize false religions in general, made strong by long tradition.



And seeing, according to fitness and order. And I heard Jehovah  
speak  
Terrific from his Holy Place, and saw the Words of the Mutual  
Covenant Divine  
On Chariots of gold and jewels, with Living Creatures starry and  
flaming,  
With every Colour, Lion, Tiger, Horse, Elephant, Eagle, Dove, Fly,  
Worm,  
And the all wondrous Serpent clothed in gems and rich array,  
Humanize  
In the Forgiveness of Sins according to Thy Covenant, Jehovah.  
They Cry:—

“Where is the Covenant of Priam, the Moral Virtues of the Heathen?  
Where is the Tree of Good and Evil that rooted beneath the cruel heel  
Of Albion's Spectre the Patriarch Druid? where are all his Human  
Sacrifices,  
For Sin in War and in the Druid Temples of the Accuser of Sin,  
beneath  
The Oak Groves of Albion that cover'd the whole Earth beneath his  
Spectre?  
Where are the Kingdoms of the World and all their glory that grew  
on Desolation?”

Such is the Cry from all the Earth, from the Living Creatures of the  
Earth,  
And from the great City of Golgonooza in the Shadowy Generation,  
And from the Thirty-two Nations of the Earth among the Living  
Creatures.

All Human Forms identified, even Tree, Metal, Earth, and Stone; all  
Human Forms identified, living, going forth and returning wearied  
Into the Planetary lives of Years, Months, Days, and Hours; reposing,  
And then awaking into His Bosom in the Life of Immortality.

And I heard the Name of their Emanations; they are namèd Jeru-  
salem.

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